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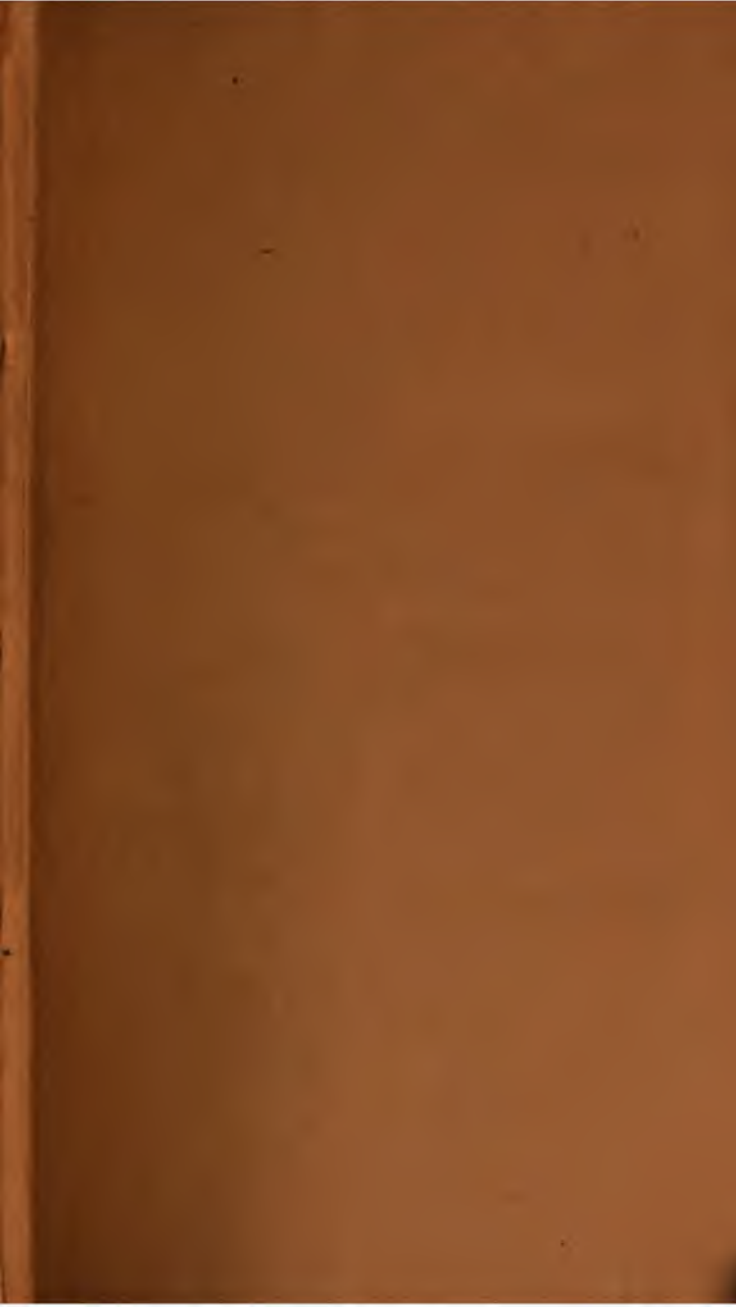
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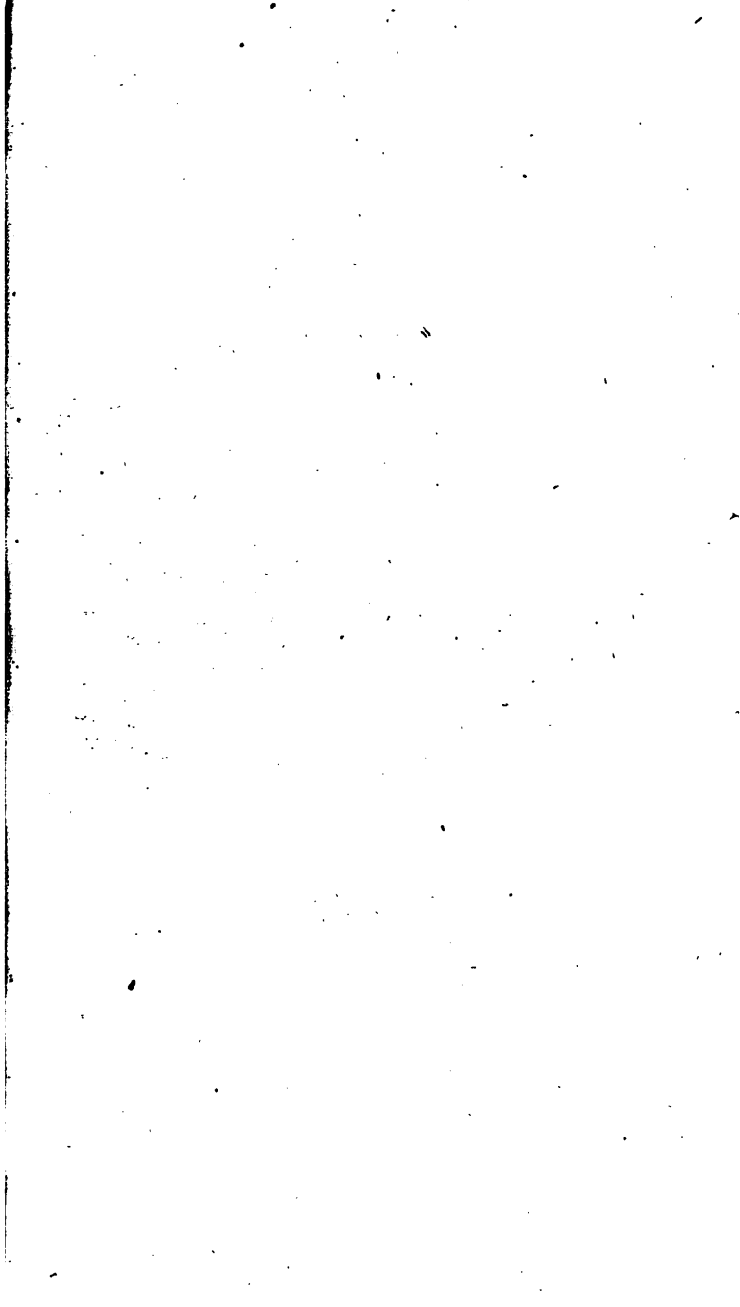
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(L O R D O N)

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MR. HARTLEY in the Character of CLEOPATRA.
I'll die, I will not bear it.

BELL'S EDITION.

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OR, THE
WORLD WELL LOST.

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*Facile est verbum aliquod ardens (ut ita dicam) notare: idque refinitis
quimmerum incendiis irridere.* CICERO.



L O N D O N :
Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THOMAS Earl of DANBY,

Viscount LATIMER, and Baron OSBORNE of KIVETON
in YORKSHIRE;Lord High Treasurer of England, one of his Majesty's most honourable Privy-Council, and Knight of the most noble order
of the Garter, &c.

My LORD,

THE gratitude of poets is so troublesome a virtue to great men, that you are often in danger of your own benefits: for you are threatened with some epistle, and not suffered to do good in quiet, or to compound for their silence whom you have obliged. Yet, I confess, I neither am, nor ought to be surprized at this indulgence; for your Lordship has the same right to favour poetry, which the great and noble have ever had.

Carmen amat, quisquis carmine digna gerit.

There is somewhat of a tie in nature betwixt those who are born for worthy actions, and those who can transmit them to posterity: And though ours be much the inferior part, it comes at least within the verge of alliance; nor are we unprofitable members of the common-wealth, when we animate others to those virtues which we copy and describe from you.

'Tis indeed their interest, who endeavour the subversion of governments, to discourage poets and historians; for the best which can happen to them is to be forgotten: But such, who, under kings, are the fathers of their country, and by a just and prudent ordering of affairs preserve it, have the same reason to cherish the chroniclers of their actions, as they have to lay up in safety the deeds and evidences of their estates: for such records are their undoubted titles to the love and reverence of after ages. Your Lordship's administration has already taken up a considerable part of the English annals; and many of its most happy years are owing to it. His Majesty, the most knowing judge of men, and the best master, has acknowledged the ease and benefit he receives in the incomes of his treasury, which you found not only disordered but exhausted. All things were in the confusion of a chaos, without form or method, if not reduced beyond it, even to annihilation: so that you had not only to separate the jarring elements, but (if that boldness of expression might be allowed me) to create them. Your enemies had so embroiled the management of your office, that they looked on your advancement as the instrument of your ruin. And as if the clogging of the revenue, and the confusion of accounts, which you found in your entrance, were not sufficient, they added their own weight of malice to the public calamity, by forestalling the credit which should cure it: your friends, on the other side, were only capable of pitying, but not of aiding you: no farther help or counsel was remaining to you, but what was founded on yourself; and that, indeed, was your security: for your diligence, your constancy, and your prudence, wrought more surely within, when they were not disturbed by any outward motion. The highest virtue is best to be trusted with itself, for assistance only can be given by a genius superior to that which it assists. And 'tis the noblest

kind of debt when we are only obliged to God and nature. This then, my Lord, is your just commendation, that you have wrought out yourself a way to glory, by those very means that were designed for your destruction : you have not only restored but advanced the revenues of your master, without grievance to the subject : and as if that were little yet, the debts of the Exchequer, which lay heaviest both on the Crown and on private persons, have, by your conduct, been established in a certainty of satisfaction. An action so much the more great and honourable, because the case was without the ordinary relief of laws ; above the hopes of the afflicted, and beyond the narrowness of the treasury to redress, had it been managed by a less able hand. 'Tis certainly the happiest, and most unenvied part of all your fortune, to do good to many, while you do injury to none : to receive at once the prayers of the subject, and the praises of the prince : and by the care of your conduct, to give him means of exerting the chiefest, (if any be the chiefest) of his royal virtues : His distributive justice to the deserving, and his bounty and compassion to the wanting. The disposition of princes towards their people, cannot better be discovered than in the choice of their ministers ; who, like the animal spirits betwixt the soul and body, participate somewhat of both natures, and make the communication which is betwixt them. A king, who is just and moderate in his nature, who rules according to the laws, whom God made happy by forming the temper of his soul to the constitution of his government, and who makes us happy, by assuming over us no other sovereignty than that wherein our welfare and liberty consists : A prince, I say, of so excellent a character, and so suitable to the wishes of all good men, could not better have conveyed himself into his people's apprehensions, than in your Lordship's person ; who so lively expresses the same virtues, that you seem not so much a copy, as an emanation of him. Moderation is doubtless an establishment of greatness ; but there is a steadiness of temper, which is likewise requisite in a minister of state : So equal a mixture of both virtues, that he may stand like an isthmus betwixt the two encroaching seas of arbitrary power and lawless anarchy. The undertaking would be difficult to any but an extraordinary genius, to stand at the line, and to divide the limits ; to pay what is due to the great representative of the nation, and neither to inhance, nor to yield up, the undoubted prerogatives of the crown. These, my Lord, are the proper virtues of a noble Englishman, as indeed they are properly English virtues : no people in the world being capable of using them, but we who have the happiness to be born under so equal, and so well-pois'd a government : a government which has all the advantages of liberty beyond a common-wealth, and all the marks of kingly sovereignty, without the danger of a tyranny. Both my nature, as I am an Englishman, and my reason, as I am a man, have bred in me a loathing to that specious name of a republic ; that mock appearance of a liberty, where all who have not part in the government, are slaves ; and slaves they are of a viler note than such as are subjects to an absolute dominion. For no christian monarchy is so absolute, but 'tis circumscribed with laws : but when the executive power is in the law-makers, there is no farther check upon them ; and the people must suffer without a remedy, because they are oppressed by their representatives. If I must serve, the

number

number of my masters, who were born my equals, would but add to the ignominy of my bondage. The nature of our government, above all other, is exactly suited both to the situation of our country, and the temper of the natives: an island being more proper for commerce and for defence, than for extending its dominions on the continent: for what the valour of its inhabitants might gain, by reason of its remoteness, and the casualties of the seas, it could not so easily preserve: And therefore, neither the arbitrary power of one in a monarchy, nor of many in a common-wealth, could make us greater than we are. 'Tis true, that vaster and more frequent taxes might be gathered, when the consent of the people was not asked or needed; but this were only by conquering abroad to be poor at home: and the examples of our neighbours teach us, that they are not always the happiest subjects whose kings extend their dominions farthest. Since therefore we cannot win by an offensive war, at least a land-war, the model of our government seems naturally contrived for the defensive part: and the consent of a people is easily obtained to contribute to that power which must protect it. *Felices nimium bona si sua norint, Anglice!* And yet there are not wanting male-contentants among us, who surfeiting themselves on too much happiness, would persuade the people that they might be happier by a change. 'Twas indeed the policy of their old fore-father, when himself was fallen from the station of glory, to seduce mankind into the same rebellion with him, by telling him, he might yet be freer than he was: that is, more free than his nature would allow, or (if I may so say) than God could make him. We have already all the liberty which free-born subjects can enjoy; and all beyond it is but license. But if it be liberty of conscience which they pretend, the moderation of our church is such, that its practice extends not to the severity of persecution, and its discipline is withal so easy, that it allows more freedom to dissenters than any of the sects would allow to it. In the mean time, what right can be pretended by these men to attempt innovations in church or state? Who made them the trustees, or (to speak a little nearer their own language) the keepers of the liberty of England? If their call be extraordinary, let them convince us by working miracles; for ordinary vocation they can have none to disturb the government under which they were born, and which protects them. He who has often changed his party, and always has made his interest the rule of it, gives little evidence of his sincerity for the public good: 'tis manifest he changes but for himself, and takes the people for tools to work his fortune. Yet the experience of all ages might let him know, that they who trouble the waters first, have seldom the benefit of the fishing: as they who began the late rebellion, enjoyed not the fruit of their undertaking, but were crushed themselves by the usurpation of their own instrument: neither is it enough for them to answer, that they only intend a reformation of the government, but not the subversion of it: on such pretences all insurrections have been founded; 'tis striking at the root of power, which is obedience. Every remonstrance of private men, has the seed of treason in it; and discourses which are couched in ambiguous terms, are therefore the more dangerous, because they do all the mischief of open sedition, yet are safe from the punishment of the laws. These, my Lord, are con-

considerations which I should not pass so lightly over, had I room to manage them as they deserve: For no man can be so inconsiderable in a nation, as not to have a share in the welfare of it; and if he be a true Englishman, he must at the same time be fired with indignation, and revenge himself as he can on the disturbers of his country. And to whom could I more fitly apply myself, than to your Lordship, who have not only an inborn, but an hereditary loyalty? The memorable constancy and sufferings of your father, almost to the ruin of his estate for the royal cause, were an earnest of that, which such a parent and such an institution would produce in the person of a son. But so unhappy an occasion of manifesting your own zeal in suffering for his present majesty, the providence of God, and the prudence of your administration, will, I hope, prevent. That as your father's fortune waited on the unhappiness of his sovereign, so your own may participate of the better fate which attends his son. The relation which you have by alliance to the noble family of your lady, serves to confirm to you both this happy augury. For what can deserve a greater place in the English chronicle, than the loyalty and courage, the actions and death of the general of an army fighting for his prince and country? The honour and gallantry of the earl of Lindsey, is so illustrious a subject, that 'tis fit to adorn an heroic poem; for he was the proto-martyr of the cause, and the type of his unfortunate royal master.

Yet, after all, my Lord, if I may speak my thoughts, you are rather happy to us than to yourself: for the multiplicity, the cares, and the vexations of your employment, have betrayed you from yourself, and given you up into the possession of the public. You are robbed of your privacy and friends, and scarce any hour of your life you can call your own. Those who envy your fortune, if they wanted not good-nature, might more justly pity it; and when they see you watched by a crowd of suitors, whose importunity 'tis impossible to avoid, would conclude with reason, that you have lost much more in true content, than you have gained by dignity; and that a private gentleman is better attended by a single servant, than your Lordship with so clamorous a train. Pardon me, my Lord, if I speak like a philosopher on this subject; the fortune which makes a man uneasy, cannot make him happy: and a wise man must think himself uneasy, when few of his actions are in his choice.

This last consideration has brought me to another, and a very seasonable one for your relief; which is, that while I pity your want of leisure, I have impertinently detained you so long a time. I have put off my own business, which was my dedication, till 'tis so late, that I am now ashamed to begin it: and therefore I will say nothing of the poem, which I present to you, because I know not if you are like to have an hour, which, with a good conscience, you may throw away in perusing it: and for the author, I have only to beg the continuance of your protection to him, who is,

My Lord,

your Lordship's, most obliged,
most humble, and most
obedient servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

PRE;

P R E F A C E.

THE death of Antony and Cleopatra, is a subject which has been treated by the greatest wits of our nation, after Shakspeare: and by all so variously, that their example has given me the confidence to try myself in this bow of Ulysses amongst the crowd of suitors; and withal, to take my own measures, in aiming at the mark. I doubt not but the same motive has prevailed with all of us in this attempt; I mean the excellency of the moral: for the chief persons represented, were famous patterns of unlawful love; and their end accordingly was unfortunate. All reasonable men have long since concluded, that the hero of the poem, ought not to be a character of perfect virtue; for, then, he could not, without injustice, be made unhappy; nor yet altogether wicked, because he could not then be pitied: I have therefore steered the middle course; and have drawn the character of Antony as favourably as Plutarch, Appian and Dion Cassius would give me leave: The like I have observed in Cleopatra. That which is wanting to work up the pity to a greater height, was not afforded me by the story: for the crimes of love which they both committed, were not occasioned by any necessity or fatal ignorance, but were wholly voluntary; since our passions are, or ought to be, within our power. The fabrick of the play is regular enough, as to the inferior parts of it; and the intricacies of time, place and action, more exactly observed, than perhaps the English theatre requires. Particularly, the action is so much one, that it is the only of the kind without episode, or under-plot; every scene in the tragedy conducing to the main design, and every act concluding with a turn of it. The greatest error in the contrivance seems to be in the person of Octavia: for, though I might use the privilege of a poet, to introduce her into Alexandria, yet I had not enough considered, that the compassion she moved to herself and children, was destructive to that which I reserved for Antony and Cleopatra; whose mutual love being founded upon vice, must lessen the favour of the audience to them, when virtue and innocence were oppressed by it. And, though I justified Antony in some measure, by making Octavia's departure to proceed wholly from herself, yet the force of the first machine still remained; and the dividing of pity, like the cutting of a river into many channels, abated the strength of the natural stream. But this is an objection which none of my critics have urged against me; and therefore I might have let it pass, if I could have resolved to have been

been partial to myself. The faults my enemies have found, are rather cavils concerning little and not essential decencies, which a master of the ceremonies may decide betwixt us. The French poets, I confess, are strict observers of these punctilio's : They would not, for example, have suffered Cleopatra and Octavia to have met, or if they had met, there must only have passed betwixt them some cold civilities, but no eagerness of repartee for fear of offending against the greatness of their characters, and the modesty of their sex. This objection I foresaw, and at the same time contemned ; for I judged it both natural and probable, that Octavia, proud of her new-gained conquest, would search out Cleopatra to triumph over her ; and that Cleopatra thus attacked, was not of a spirit to shun the encounter : and 'tis not unlikely, that two exasperated rivals should use such satire as I have put into their mouths ; for after all, though the one were a Roman, and the other a queen, they were both women. 'Tis true, some actions, though natural, are not fit to be represented ; and broad obscenities in words, ought in good manners to be avoided : expressions therefore are a modest cloathing of our thoughts, as breeches and petticoats are of our bodies. If I have kept myself within the bounds of modesty, all beyond it is but nicety and affectation ; which is no more but modesty depraved into a vice : they betray themselves who are too quick of apprehension in such cases, and leave all reasonable men to imagine worse of them, than of the poet.

Honest Montaigne goes yet farther : *Nous ne sommes que ceremonie ; la ceremonie nous emporte, & laissons la substance des choses. Nous nous tenons aux branches & abandonnons le trone & le corps. Nous avons appris aux dames de rougir, oyans seulement nommer ce qu'elles ne craignent aucunement à faire : nous n'osons appeller à droit nos membres, & ne craignons pas de les employer à toute sorte de debauché. La ceremonie nous defend d'exprimer par paroles les choses licites & naturelles, & nous l'en craignons ; la raison nous defend de n'en faire point d'illicites & mauvaises, & personne ne l'en croit.* My comfort is, that by this opinion my enemies are but sucking criticks, who would fain be nibbling e'er their teeth are come.

Yet in this nicety of manners does the excellency of French poetry consist : their heroes are the most civil people breathing ; but their good-breeding seldom extends to a word of sense : all their wit is in their ceremony ; they want the genius which animates our stage ; and therefore 'tis but necessary when they cannot please, that they should take care not to offend. But as the civillest man in the company is commonly the dullest, so these authors, while they are afraid to make you laugh or cry, out of pure good manners, make you sleep. They are so careful not to exasperate a critic, that they never leave him any work ; so busy with the broom, and make so clean a riddance, that there is little left either for censure or for praise : for no part of a poem is worth our discommending, where the whole is insipid ; as when we have once tasted of palled wine, we stay not to examine it glass by glass. But while they affect to shine in trifles, they are often careless in essentials. Thus their Hippolytus is so scrupulous in point of decency, that he will

will rather expose himself to death, than accuse his step-mother to his father; and my critics, I am sure, will commend him for it: but we of grosser apprehensions, are apt to think that this excess of generosity, is not practicable but with fools and mad-men. This was good-manners with a vengeance; and the audience is like to be much concerned at the misfortunes of this admirable hero: but take Hippolytus out of his poetic fit, and I suppose he would think it a wiser part, to set the saddle on the right horse, and chuse rather to live with the reputation of a plain-spoken honest man, than to die with the infamy of an incestuous villain. In the mean time we may take notice, that where the poet ought to have preserved the character as it was delivered to us by antiquity, when he should have given us the picture of a rough young man, of the Amazonian strain, a jolly huntsman, and both by his profession, and his early rising, a mortal enemy to love, he has chosen to give him the turn of gallantry, sent him to travel from Athens to Paris, taught him to make love, and transformed the Hippolytus of Euripides into Monsieur Hippolyte. I should not have troubled myself thus far with French poets, but that I find our Chedruex critics wholly form their judgments by them. But for my part, I desire to be tried by the laws of my own country; for it seems unjust to me, that the French should prescribe here till they have conquered. Our little sonnet-tiers who follow them, have too narrow souls to judge of poetry. Poets themselves are the most proper, though I conclude not the only critics. But till some genius as universal as Aristotle, shall arise, who can penetrate into all arts and sciences, without the practice of them, I shall think it reasonable that the judgment of an artificer in his own art, should be preferable to the opinion of another man: at least where he is not bribed by interest, or prejudiced by malice; and this, I suppose, is manifest by plain induction: for, first, the crowd cannot be presumed to have more than a gross instinct of what pleases or displeases them: every man will grant me this; but then, by a particular kindness to himself, he draws his own stake first, and will be distinguished from the multitude, of which other men may think him one. But, if I come closer to those who are allowed for witty men, either by the advantage of their quality, or by common fame, and affirm, that neither are they qualified to decide sovereignly, concerning poetry, I shall yet have a strong party of my opinion; for most of them severally will exclude the rest, either from the number of witty men, or at least of able judges. But here again they are all indulgent to themselves: and every one who believes himself a wit, that is, every man, will pretend at the same time to a right of judging. But to press it yet farther, there are many witty men, but few poets, neither have all poets a taste of tragedy. And this is the rock on which they are daily splitting. Poetry, which is a picture of nature, must generally please: but 'tis not to be understood, that all parts of it must please every man; therefore is not tragedy to be judged by a witty man, whose taste is only confined to comedy. Nor is every man who loves tragedy a sufficient judge of it: he must understand the excellencies of it too, or he will only prove a blind admirer, not a critic. From hence it comes,

comes, that so many satires on poets, and censures of their writings, fly abroad. Men of pleasant conversation, (at least esteemed so) and indued with a trifling kind of fancy, perhaps helped out with some smattering of Latin, are ambitious to distinguish themselves from the herd of gentlemen, by their poetry ;

*Rarus enim fermè sensus communis in illà
Fortunâ.*

And is not this a wretched affectation, not to be contented with what fortune has done for them, and sit down quietly with their estates, but they must call their wits in question, and needlessly expose their nakedness to public view? Not considering that they are not to expect the same approbation from sober men, which they have found from their flatterers after the third bottle? If a little glittering in discourse has passed them on us for witty men, where was the necessity of undeceiving the world? Would a man who has an ill title to an estate, but yet is in possession of it, would he bring it of his own accord to be tried at Westminster? We who write, if we want the talent, yet have the excuse that we do it for a poor subsistence; but what can be urged in their defence, who not having the vocation of poverty to scribble, out of mere wantonness, take pains to make themselves ridiculous? Horace was certainly in the right, where he said, That no man is satisfied with his own condition. A poet is not pleased because he is not rich; and the rich are discontented, because the poets will not admit them of their number. Thus the case is hard with writers: if they succeed not, they must starve; and if they do, some malicious satire is prepared to level them for daring to please without their leave. But while they are so eager to destroy the fame of others, their ambition is manifest in their concernment: some poem of their own is to be produced, and the slaves are to be laid flat with their faces on the ground, that the monarch may appear in the greater majesty.

Dionysius and Nero had the same longings, but with all their power they could never bring their business well about. 'Tis true, they proclaimed themselves poets by sound of trumpet; and poets they were, upon pain of death to any man who durst call them otherwise. The audience had a fine time on't, you may imagine; they sat in a bodily fear, and looked as demurely as they could: for 'twas a hanging matter to laugh unseasonably; and the tyrants were suspicious, as they had reason, that their subjects had them in the wind; so every man in his own defence set as good a face upon the business as he could: 'twas known before-hand that the monarchs were to be crowned laureats; but when the show was over, and an honest man was suffered to depart quietly, he took out his laughter which he had stifled, with a firm resolution never more to see an emperor's play, though he had been ten years a making it. In the mean time, the true poets were they who made the best markets, for they had wit enough to yield the prize with a good grace, and not contend with him who had thirty legions: they were sure to be rewarded if they confessed themselves bad writers, and that was somewhat better than to be martyrs for their reputation. Lucan's example was enough to teach them manners; and after he was put

to death, for overcoming Nero, the emperor carried it, without dispute, for the best poet in his dominions: no man was ambitious of that grinning honour; for if he heard the malicious trumpeter proclaiming his name before his betters, he knew there was but one way with him. Mæcenas took another course, and we know he was more than a great man, for he was witty too: but finding himself far gone in poetry, which Seneca assures us was not his talent, he thought it his best way to be well with Virgil and with Horace; that at least he might be a poet at the second hand; and we see how happily it has succeeded with him; for his own bad poetry is forgotten, and their panegyrics of him still remain. But they who should be our patrons, are for no such expensive ways to fame: they have much of the poetry of Mæcenas, but little of his liberality. They are for procuring themselves reputation in the persons of their successors, (for such is every man, who has any part of their soul and fire, though in a less degree.) Some of their little Zanies yet go further; for they are persecutors even of Horace himself, as far as they are able, by their ignorant and vile imitations of him; by making an unjust use of his authority, and turning his artillery against his friends. But how would he disdain to be copied by such hands! I dare answer for him, he would be more uneasy in their company, than he was with Crispinus their forefather in the Holy Way; and would no more have allowed them a place among the critics, than he would Demetrius the mimic, and Tigellius the buffoon;

—————*Demetri, teque Tigelli,*

Discipulorum inter jubeo plorare cathedras.

With what scorn would he look down on such miserable translators, who make doggerel of his Latin, mistake his meaning, misapply his censures, and often contradict their own? He is fixed as a landmark to set out the bounds of poetry,

—————*Saxum, antiquum ingens*

Limes agro positus litem ut discerneret arvis :

But other arms than theirs, and other sinews are required, to raise the weight of such an author; and when they would toss him against their enemies,

Genua labant, gelidus concrevit frigore sanguis,

Tum lapis ipse, viri vacuum per inane volutus

Nec spatium evasit totum, nec pertulit ictum.

For my part, I would wish no other revenge, either for myself or the rest of the poets, from this rhiming judge of the twelve-penny gallery, this legitimate son of Sternhold, than that he would subscribe his name to his censure, or (not to tax him beyond his learning) set his mark: for should he own himself publicly, and come from behind the lion's skin, they whom he condemns would be thankful to him, they whom he praises would chuse to be condemned; and the magistrates whom he has elected, would modestly withdraw from their employment, to avoid the scandal of his nomination. The sharpness of his satire, next to himself, falls most heavily on his friends, and they ought never to forgive him for commending them perpetually the wrong way, and sometimes by contraries.

ries. If he have a friend whose hastiness in writing is his greatest fault, Horace would have taught him to have minced the matter, and to have called it readiness of thought, and a flowing fancy; for friendship will allow a man to christen an imperfection by the name of some neighbour virtue:

Vellem in amicitia sic erraremus; & isti

Errori, nomen virtus posuisset honestum.

But he would never have allowed him to have called a slow man hasty, or a hasty writer a slow drudge, as Juvenal explains it:

Canibus pigris scabieque vetusta

Levibus, & specca lamentibus ora lucernæ

Nomen erit, pardus, tygris, leo, si quid adhuc est.

Quod fremit in terris violentius.

Yet Lucretius laughs at a foolish lover, even for excusing the imperfections of his mistress:

Nigra μένυχρος ἐστὶ, immunda & fetida ἀνθρώπος

Balba loqui non quis, τρυφύλλει; muta pudens ἐστὶ, &c.

But to drive it, *ad Æthiopem cygnum*, is not to be indured. I leave him to interpret this, by the benefit of his French version on the other side, and without farther considering him; than I have the rest of my illiterate censors, whom I have disdained to answer, because they are not qualified for judges. It remains that I acquaint the reader, that I have endeavoured in this play to follow the practice of the antients, who, as Mr. Rymer has judiciously observed, are and ought to be our masters. Horace likewise gives it for a rule in his art of poetry,

— Vos exemplaria Græcæ

Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.

Yet, though their models are regular, they are too little for English tragedy; which requires to be built in a larger compass. I could give an instance in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, which was the master-piece of Sophocles; but I reserve it for a more fit occasion, which I hope to have hereafter. In my stile, I have professed, to imitate the divine Shakspeare; which that I might perform more freely, I have disincumbered myself from rhyme. Not that I condemn my former way, but that this is more proper to my present purpose. I hope I need not to explain myself, that I have not copied my author servilely. Words and phrases must of necessity receive a change in succeeding ages: but 'tis almost a miracle that much of his language remains so pure; and that he who began dramatic poetry amongst us, untaught by any, and as Ben. Johnson tells us, without learning, should, by the force of his own genius perform so much, that, in a manner, he has left no praise for any who come after him: The occasion is fair, and the subject would be pleasant to handle the difference of styles betwixt him and Fletcher, and wherein, and how far they are both to be imitated. But since I must not be over-confident of my own performance after him, it will be prudence in me to be silent. Yet I hope I may affirm, and without vanity, that by imitating him I have excelled myself throughout the play; and particularly, that I prefer the scene betwixt Antony and Ventidius in the first act, to any thing which I have written in this kind.

P R O L O G U E.

WHAT flocks of criticks hover here to-day,
 As vultures wait on armies for their prey,
 All gaping for the carcase of a play!
 With croaking notes they bode some dire event,
 And follow dying poets by the scent.
 Ours gives himself for gone; you've watch'd your time;
 He fights this day unarm'd, without his rhyme.
 And brings a tale which often has been told;
 As sad as Dido's, and almost as old.
 His hero, whom you wits his bully call,
 Bates of his mettle, and scarce rants at all:
 He's somewhat lewd, but a well-meaning mind;
 Weeps much, fights little, but is wondrous kind.
 In short, a pattern, and companion fit.
 For all the keeping tonies of the pit.
 I could name more; a wife and mistress too,
 Both (to be plain) too good for most of you;
 The wife well-natur'd, and the mistress true.

Now, poets, if your fame has been his care,
 Allow him all the candour you can spare.
 A brave man scorns to quarrel once a day;
 Like Hector's, in at every petty fray.
 Let those find fault, whose wits so very small,
 They've need to show that they can think at all;
 Errors like straws upon the surface flow,
 He who would search for pearls, must dive below.
 Fops may have leave to level all they can,
 As pigmies would be glad to lop a man.
 Half-wits are fleas, so little and so light,
 We scarce could know they live, but that they bite.
 But, as the rich, when vir'd with daily feasts,
 For change, become their next poor tenant's guests;
 Drink hearty draughts of ale, from plain brown bowls,
 And snatch the homely rasber from the coals:
 So you, retiring from much better cheer,
 For once, may venture to do penance here.
 And since that plenteous autumn now is past,
 Whose grapes and peaches have indulg'd your taste,
 Take in good part, from our poor poet's board,
 Such rivell'd fruits as winter can afford.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>	<i>Covent-Garden.</i>
<i>Marc Antony,</i>	Mr. Smith.	Mr. Barry.
<i>Ventidius, his General,</i>	Mr. Palmer.	Mr. Clarke.
<i>Dolabella, his Friend,</i>	Mr. Brereton.	Mr. Aickin.
<i>Alexas, the Queen's Eunuch,</i>	Mr. Whitfield.	Mr. Young.
<i>Scrapion, Priest of Isis,</i>		Mr. Bates.
<i>Romans,</i>	{ Mr. Griffiths.	Mr. L'Estrange.
	{ Mr. Norris.	Mr. Thompson.

W O M E N.

<i>Cleopatra, queen of Egypt,</i>	Miss Younge.	Mrs. Hartley.
<i>Octavia, Anthony's Wife,</i>	Mrs. Yates.	Mrs. Mattocks.
<i>Charmion,</i>	{ <i>Cleopatra's</i>	{ Mrs. Johnston.
<i>Iras,</i>	{ Maids,	{ Miss Platt.
<i>Anthony's two little daughters.</i>		Mrs. Hippisley.

SCENE, ALEXANDRIA.

ALL FOR LOVE;

OR, THE

WORLD WELL LOST.

ACT I.

SCENE, *the Temple of Isis.*

Serapion, Myris, *Priests of Isis, discovered.*

SERAPION.

Portents and prodigies are grown so frequent,
That they have lost their names. Our fruitful Nile
Flow'd ere the wonted season, with a torrent
So unexpected, and so wond'rous fierce,
That the wild deluge overtook the haste
Ev'n of the hinds that watch'd it. Men and beasts
Were borne above the tops of trees, that grew
On th' utmost margin of the water-mark.
Then, with so swift an ebb, the flood drove backward,
It slipt from underneath the scaly herd:
Here monstrous Phocæ panted on the shore;
Forfaken dolphins there, with their broad tails,
Lay lashing the departing waves: hard by 'em,
Sea horses flound'ring in the slimy mud,
Toss'd up their heads, and dash'd the ooze about 'em.

Enter Alexas, behind them.

Myr. Avert these omens, Heaven.

Ser. Last night, between the hours of twelve and one,
In a lone isle o'the temple while I walk'd,
A whirlwind rose, that, with a violent blast,
Shook all the dome: the doors around me clapt;
The iron wicket, that defends the vault,
Where the long race of Ptolemies is laid,
Burst open, and disclos'd the mighty dead.

From out each monument, in order plac'd,
 An armed ghost starts up; the boy-king last
 Rear'd his inglorious head. A peal of groans
 Then follow'd, and a lamentable voice
 Cry'd, Ægypt is no more. My blood ran back,
 My shaking knees against each other knock'd;
 On the cold pavement down I fell intranc'd,
 And so unfinish'd left the horrid scene?

Alex. And dream'd you this? or, did invent the story,
 [Shewing himself.

To frighten our Ægyptian boys withal,
 And train 'em up betimes in fear of priesthood?

Ser. My lord, I saw you not,
 Nor meant my words should reach your ears; but what
 I utter'd was most true.

Alex. A foolish dream,
 Bred from the fumes of indigested feasts,
 And holy luxury.

Ser. I know my duty:
 This goes no farther.

Alex. 'Tis not fit it should:
 Nor would the times now bear it, were it true.
 All southern from yon hills, the Roman camp
 Hangs o'er us black and threat'ning, like a storm
 Just breaking on our heads.

' *Ser.* Our faint Ægyptians pray for Antony;
 ' But in their servile hearts they own Octavius.

' *Myr.* Why then does Antony dream out his hours,
 ' And tempts not fortune for a noble day,
 ' Which might redeem what Actium lost?

' *Alex.* He thinks 'tis past recovery.

' *Ser.* Yet the foe
 ' Seems not to press the siege.

' *Alex.* Oh, there's the wonder.
 ' Mecænas and Agrippa, who can most
 ' With Cæsar, are his foes. His wife Octavia,
 ' Driv'n from his house, solicits her revenge;
 ' And Dolabella, who was once his friend,
 ' Upon some private grudge; now seeks his ruin;
 ' Yet still war seems on either side to sleep.'

Ser. 'Tis strange that Antony, for some days past,
 Has not beheld the face of Cleopatra,

But

But here, in Isis' temple lives retir'd,
And makes his heart a prey to black despair.

Alex. 'Tis true; and we much fear he hopes by ab-
To cure his mind of love. [sence

Ser. If he be vanquish'd,
Or make his peace, Ægypt is doom'd to be
A Roman province; and our plenteous harvests
Must then redeem the scarceness of their soil.
While Antony stood firm, our Alexandria
Rival'd proud Rome, (dominion's other seat;)
And Fortune striding, like a vast Colossus,
Could fix an equal foot of empire here.

Alex. Had I my wish, these tyrants of all nature,
Who lord it o'er mankind, should perish, perish,
Each by the other's sword; but, since our will
Is lamely follow'd by our pow'r, we must
Depend on one; with him to rise or fall.

Ser. How stands the queen affected?

Alex. Oh, she dotes,
She dotes, Serapion, on this vanquish'd man,
And winds herself about his mighty ruins;
Whom, would she yet forsake, yet yield him up,
This hunted prey to his pursuer's hands,
She might preserve us all; but 'tis in vain——
This changes my designs, this blasts my counsels,
And makes me use all means to keep him here,
Whom I could wish divided from her arms,
Far as the earth's deep centre. Well, you know
The state of things; no more of your ill omens,
And black prognostics; labour to confirm
The people's hearts.

*Enter Ventidius, talking aside with a gentleman off
Antony's.*

Ser. These Romans will o'er-hear us.
But, who's that stranger? By his warlike port,
His fierce demeanour, and erected look,
He's of no vulgar note.

Alex. Oh, 'tis Ventidius,
Our emperor's great lieutenant in the east,
Who first shew'd Rome that Parthia could be conquer'd.
When Antony return'd from Syria last,
He left this man to guard the Roman frontiers.

Ser. You seem to know him well.

Alex. Too well. I saw him in Cilicia first,
When Cleopatra there met Antony;
A mortal foe he was to us, and Ægypt.
But, let me witness to the worth I hate,
A braver Roman never drew a sword:
Firm to his prince; but, as a friend, not slave.
He ne'er was of his pleasures; but presides
O'er all his cooler hours, and morning counsels:
In short, the plainness, fierceness, rugged virtue,
Of an old true-stampt Roman lives in him.
His coming bodes I know not what of ill
To our affairs. Withdraw, to mark him better;
And I'll acquaint you why I sought you here,
And what's our present work.

[They withdraw to a corner of the stage; and Ventidius, with the other, comes forward to the front.]

Vent. Not see him, say you?

I say, I must, and will.

Gent. He has commanded,
On pain of death, none should approach his presence.

Vent. I bring him news will raise his drooping spirits,
Give him new life.

Gent. He sees not Cleopatra.

Vent. Would he had never seen her.

Gent. He eats not, drinks not, sleeps not, has no use
Of any thing, but thought; or, if he talks,
'Tis to himself; and then 'tis perfect raving:
Then he defies the world, and bids it pass.
Sometimes he gnaws his lip, and curses loud
The boy Octavius; then he draws his mouth
Into a scornful smile, and cries, Take all,
The world's not worth my care.

Vent. Just, just his nature.

Virtue's his path; but sometimes 'tis too narrow
For his vast soul; and then he starts out wide,
And bounds into a vice that bears him far
From his first course, and plunges him in ill:

• But, when his danger makes him find his fault,
• Quick to observe, and full of sharp remorse,
• He censures eagerly his own misdeeds,
• Judging himself with malice to himself,

• And

‘ And not forgiving what as man he did,
 ‘ Because his other parts are more than man.’
 He must not thus be lost;

[*Alexas and the priests come forward.*]

Alex. You have your full instructions; now advance;
 Proclaim your orders loudly.

Ser. Romans, Ægyptians, hear the queen’s com-
 Thus Cleopatra bids: Let labour cease; [mand.
 To pomp and triumphs give this happy day,
 That gave the world a lord; ’tis Antony’s.
 Live, Antony; and Cleopatra live.
 Be this the general voice sent up to heav’n,
 And ev’ry public place repeat this echo.

Vent. Fine pageantry! [Aside.

Ser. Set out before your doors
 The images of all your sleeping fathers,
 With laurels crown’d; with laurels wreath your posts,
 And strow with flow’rs the pavement; let the priest
 Do present sacrifice, pour out the wine,
 And call the gods to join with you in gladness.

Vent. Curse on the tongue that bids this general joy.
 Can they be friends of Antony, who revel
 When Antony’s in danger? Hide, for shame,
 You Romans, your great grandfathers images,
 For fear their souls should animate their marbles,
 To blush at their degenerate progeny.

Alex. A love which knows no bounds to Antony,
 Would mark the day with honours; when all Heav’n
 Labour’d for him, when each propitious star
 Stood wakeful in his orb, to watch that hour,
 And shed his better influence. Her own birth-day
 Our queen neglected, like a vulgar fate,
 That pass’d obscurely by.

Vent. Would it had slept,
 Divided far from his, till some remote
 And future age had call’d it out, to ruin
 Some other prince, not him.

Alex. Your emperor,
 Tho’ grown unkind, would be more gentle, than
 T’upbraid my queen, for loving him too well.

Vent. ‘ Does the mute sacrifice upbraid the priest?
 ‘ He knows him not his executioner.

‘ Oh,

' Oh, she has deck'd his ruin with her love,
 ' Led him in golden hands to gaudy slaughter,
 ' And made perdition pleasing : she has left him
 ' The blank of what he was ;

I tell thee, eunuch, she has quite unmann'd him :
 Can any Roman see, and know him now,
 Thus alter'd from the lord of half mankind,
 Unbent, unfinew'd, made a woman's toy,
 Shrunk from the vast extent of all his honours,
 And cramp'd within a corner of the world ?

Oh, Antony !

Thou bravest soldier, and thou best of friends !
 Bounteous as nature ; next to nature's god !
 Couldst thou but make new worlds, so wouldst thou give
 As bounty were thy being. Rough in battle, [em,
 As the first Romans, when they went to war ;
 Yet, after victory, more pitiful,
 Than all their praying virgins left at home !

Alex. Would you could add to those more shining vir-
 His truth to her who loves him. [tues.

Fest. Would I could not.

But, wherefore waste I precious hours with thee ?
 Thou art her darling mischief, her chief engine,
 Antony's other fate. Go, tell thy queen,
 Ventidius is arriv'd, to end her charms.
 Let your Egyptian timbrels play alone ;
 Nor mix effeminate sounds with Roman trumpets.
 You dare not fight for Antony ; go pray,
 And keep your coward's holy-day in temples.

[*Exeunt Alex. Ser.*

Re-enter the Gentleman of M. Antony.

2 *Gent.* The emperor approaches, and commands,
 On pain of death, that none presume to stay.

1 *Gent.* I dare not disobey him. [*Going out with the other.*

Vent. Well, I dare.

But I'll observe him first unseen, and find
 Which way his humour drives : the rest I'll venture.

[*Withdraws.*

*Enter Antony, walking with a disturb'd motion before
 he speaks.*

Ant. They tell me, 'tis my birth-day, and I'll keep it
 With double pomp of sadness.

'Tis.

'Tis what the day deserves, which gave me breath.
 Why was I rais'd the meteor of the world,
 Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travell'd,
 'Till all my fires were spent, and then cast downward
 To be trod out by Cæsar?

Vent. [Aside.] On my soul.

'Tis mournful, wond'rous mournful!

Ant. Count thy gains,

Now, Antony, wouldst thou be born for this?
 Glutton of fortune, thy devouring youth
 Has starv'd thy wanting age.

Vent. [Aside.] How sorrow shakes him!
 So now the tempest tears him up by th' roots,
 And on the ground extends the noble ruin.

Ant. [Having thrown himself down.] Lie there, thou
 shadow of an emperor;

The place thou presteest on thy mother earth
 Is all thy empire now: now it contains thee;
 Some few days hence, and then 'twill be too large,
 When thou'rt contracted in thy narrow urn,
 Shrunk to a few cold ashes; then Octavia,
 (For Cleopatra will not live to see it)
 Octavia then will have thee all her own,
 And bear thee in her widow'd hand to Cæsar.

'Cæsar will weep, the crocodile will weep,

'To see his rival of the universe

'Lie still and peaceful there.' I'll think no more on't.

Give me some musick; look that it be sad.

I'll sooth my melancholy, 'till I swell,

And burst myself with sighing——— *{Soft music.}*

'Tis somewhat to my humour. Stay, I fancy

I'm now turn'd wild, a commoner of nature;

Of all forsaken, and forsaking all;

Live in a shady forest's sylvan scene,

Stretch'd at my length beneath some blasted oak,

I lean my head upon the mossy bark,

And look just of a piece, as I grew from it:

My uncomb'd locks, matted like mistletoe,

Hang o'er my hoary face; a murm'ring brook

Runs at my foot——

Vent. Methinks, I fancy

'Myself there too.

Ant.

Ant. The herd come jumping by me,
 And fearless, quench their thirst, while I look on,
 And take me for their fellow citizen.
 More of this image, more; it lulls my thoughts.

[Soft music again.]

Vent. I must disturb him. I can hold no longer.

[Stands before him.]

Ant. [Starting up.] Art thou Ventidius?

Vent. Are you Antony?

I'm liker what I was, than you to him.

I left you last.

Ant. I'm angry.

Vent. So am I.

Ant. I would be private. Leave me.

Vent. Sir, I love you,

And therefore will not leave you.

Ant. Will not leave me!

Where have you learnt that answer? Who am I?

Vent. My emperor; the man I love next Heav'n.

If I said more, I think 'twere scarce a sin:

You're all that's good, and god-like.

Ant. All that's wretched.

You will not leave me then?

Vent. 'Twas too presuming.

To say I would not: but I dare not leave you;

And 'tis unkind in you to chide me hence

So soon, when I so far have come to see you.

Ant. Now thou hast seen me, art thou satisfy'd?

For, if a friend, thou hast beheld enough,

And, if a foe, too much.

Vent. Look, emperor, this is no common dew,

[Weeping.]

I have not wept this forty years; but now

My mother comes afresh into my eyes;

I cannot help her softness.

Ant. By Heav'n, he weeps, poor good old man, he

The big round drops course one another down [weeps]

The furrows of his cheeks. Stop 'em, Ventidius,

Or I shall blush to death; they set my shame,

That caus'd 'em, full before me.

Vent. I'll do my best.

Ant. Sure there's contagion in the tears of friends;

See,

'See, I have caught it too. Believe me, 'tis not
For my own griefs, but thine——Nay, father——

Vent. Emperor!

Ant. Emperor! Why that's the stile of victory.
The conqu'ring foldier, red with unfelt wounds,
Salutes his general so: but never more
Shall that sound reach my ears.

Vent. I warrant you.

Ant. Actium, Actium! Oh——

Vent. It fits too near you.

Ant. Here, here it lies; a lump of lead by day;
And in my short, distracted, nightly slumbers,
The hag that rides my dreams——

Vent. Out with it; give it vent.

Ant. Urge not my shame——
I lost a battle.

Vent. So has Julius done.

Ant. Thou favour'st me, and speak'st not half thou
For Julius fought it out, and lost it fairly: [think'st;
But Antony——

Vent. Nay, stop not.

Ant. Antony,
(Well, thou wilt have it) like a coward, fled,
Fled while his foldiers fought? fled first, Ventidius.
Thou long'st to curse me, and I give thee leave.
' I know thou cam'st prepar'd to rail.

Vent. I did.

Ant. I'll help thee—I have been a man, Ventidius.

Vent. Yes, and a brave one; but——

Ant. I know thy meaning.

But I have lost my reason, have disgrac'd
The name of foldier, with inglorious ease.

' In the full vintage of my flowing honours,

' Sate still, and saw it prest by other hands.

' Fortune came smiling to my youth, and woo'd it,

' And purple greatness met my ripen'd years.

' When first I came to empire, I was borne

' On tides of people, crouding to my triumphs;

' The wish of nations, and the willing world,

' Receiv'd me as its pledge of future peace.

' I was so great, so happy, so belov'd,

' Fate could not ruin me; till I took pains,

' And work'd against my fortune, chid her from me,
 ' And turn'd her loose : yet still she came again.
 ' My careless days, and my luxurious nights,
 ' At length have weary'd her, and now she's gone,
 ' Gone, gone, divorc'd for ever.' Help me, soldier,
 To curse this mad-man, this industrious fool,
 Who labour'd to be wretched. Pr'ythee curse me

Vent. No.

Ant. Why?

Vent. You are too sensible already
 Of what you've done ; too conscious of your failings ;
 And like a scorpion, whipt by others first
 To fury, sting yourself in mad revenge.
 I would bring balm, and pour it in your wounds,
 Cure your distemper'd mind, and heal your fortunes.

Ant. I know thou wouldst.

Vent. I will.

' *Ant.* Ha, ha, ha, ha.

' *Vent.* You laugh.

' *Ant.* I do, to see officious love
 ' Give cordials to the dead.

' *Vent.* You would be lost then ?

' *Ant.* I am.

' *Vent.* I say you are not. Try your fortune.

' *Ant.* I have to th' utmost. Dost thou think me def-
 ' Without just cause ? No, when I found all lost [perate
 ' Beyond repair, I hid me from the world,
 ' And learnt to scorn it here ; which now I do
 ' So heartily, I think it is not worth
 ' The cost of keeping.

' *Vent.* Cæsar thinks not so :

' He'll thank you for the gift he could not take.
 ' You would be kill'd, like Tully, would you ? Do
 ' Hold out your throat to Cæsar, and die tamely.

' *Ant.* No, I can kill myself ; and so resolve.

' *Vent.* I can die with you too, when time shall serve ;
 ' But fortune calls upon us now to live,
 ' To fight, to conquer.'

Ant. Sure thou dream'st, Ventidius.

Vent. No ; 'tis you dream ; you sleep away your hours
 In desperate sloth, miscall'd philosophy.

Up, up, for honour's sake ; twelve legions wait you,

And

And long to call you chief. By painful journeys,
 I led 'em, patient both of heat and hunger,
 Down from the Parthian marches, to the Nile.
 'Twill do you good to see their sun-burnt faces,
 Their scarr'd cheeks, and chopt hands; there's virtue in
 They'll sell those mangled limbs at dearer rates ['em:
 Than yon trim bands can buy.

Ant. Where left you them? ✓

Vent. I said, in lower Syria.

Ant. Bring 'em hither;
 There may be life in these.

Vent. They will not come.

Ant. Why didst thou mock my hopes with promis'd
 To double my despair? They're mutinous. [aids,

Vent. Most firm and loyal.

Ant. Yet they will not march

Ant. To succour me. Oh, triffler!

Vent. They petition

Ant. You would make haste to head 'em.

Ant. I'm besieg'd.

Vent. There's but one way shut up—How came I

Ant. I will not stir. [hither?

Vent. They would perhaps desire

Ant. A better reason.

Ant. I have never us'd

My soldiers to demand a reason of

My actions.' Why did they refuse to march? ✓

Vent. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.

Ant. What was't they said?

Vent. They said, they would not fight for Cleopatra.

Why should they fight, indeed, to make her conquer,

And make you more a slave? To gain you kingdoms,

Which, for a kiss, at your next midnight feast,

You'll sell to her?—Then she new names her jewels,

And calls this diamond such or such a tax;

Each pendant in her ear shall be a province. ✓

Ant. Ventidius, I allow your tongue free licence

On all my other faults; but, on your life,

No word of Cleopatra; she deserves

More worlds than I can lose.

Vent. Behold, you pow'rs,

To whom you have intrusted human kind;

See Europe, Africk, Asia put in balance ;
 And all weigh'd down by one light worthless woman !
 ' I think the gods are Antonies, and give,
 ' Like prodigals, this nether world away
 ' To none but wasteful hands.'

Ant. You grow presumptuous.

Vent. I take the privilege of plain love to speak.

Ant. Plain love ! Plain arrogance, plain insolence !

Thy men are cowards ; thou, an envious traitor ;
 Who, under seeming honesty, hath vented
 The burden of thy rank o'erflowing gall.
 Oh, that thou wert my equal ; great in arms
 As the first Cæsar was, that I might kill thee
 Without stain to my honour !

Vent. You may kill me.

You have done more already ; call'd me traitor.

Ant. Art thou not one ?

Vent. For showing you yourself,
 Which none else durst have done. But had I been
 That name, which I disdain to speak again,
 I needed not have fought your abject fortunes,
 Come to partake your fate, to die with you.
 What hinder'd me to've led my conqu'ring eagles
 To fill Octavia's bands ? I could have been
 A traitor then, a glorious happy traitor,
 And not have been so call'd.

Ant. Forgive me, soldier ;
 I've been too passionate.

Vent. You thought me false ;
 Thought my old age betray'd you. Kill me, Sir ;
 Pray kill me ; yet, you need not, your unkindness
 Has left your sword no work.

Ant. I did not think so ;
 I said it in my rage : pr'ythee forgive me.
 Why didst thou tempt my anger, by discovery
 Of what I would not hear ?

Vent. No prince but you
 Could merit that sincerity I us'd,
 Nor durst another man have ventur'd it :
 ' But you, ere love misled your wand'ring eyes,
 ' Were sure the chief and best of human race,
 ' Fram'd in the very pride and boast of nature ;

- ‘ So perfect, that the gods who form’d you wonder’d
- ‘ At their own skill, and cry’d, A lucky hit
- ‘ Has mended our design. Their envy hindered,
- ‘ Else you had been immortal, and a pattern
- ‘ When Heav’n would work for ostentation sake,
- ‘ To copy out again.’

Ant. But Cleopatra——

Go on ; for I can bear it now.

Vent. No more.

Ant. Thou dar’st not trust my passion ; but thou may’st ;
Thou only lov’st, the rest have flatter’d me.

Vent. Heaven’s blessing on your heart, for that kind
May I believe you love me ? Speak again. [word.

Ant. Indeed I do. Speak this, and this, and this.

[Hugging him.

Thy praises were unjust ; but, I’ll deserve ’em,
And yet mend all. Do with me what thou wilt ;
Lead me to victory, thou know’st the way.

Vent. And, will you leave this——

Ant. Pr’ythee do not curse her,
And I will leave her ; though, Heav’n knows, I love
Beyond life, conquest, empire, all, but honour :
But I will leave her.

Vent. That’s my royal master.

And, shall we fight ?

Ant. I warrant thee, old soldier ;
Thou shalt behold me once again in iron,
And, at the head of our old troops, that beat
The Parthians, cry aloud, Come follow me.

Vent. Oh, now I hear my emperor ! In that word
Octavius fell. Gods, let me see that day,
And, if I have ten years behind, take all ;
I’ll thank you for th’ exchange.

‘ *Ant.* Oh, Cleopatra !

‘ *Vent.* Again !

‘ *Ant.* I’ve done. In that last sigh, she went.

‘ Cæsar shall know what ’tis to force a lover

‘ From all he holds most dear.

‘ *Vent.* Methinks you breathe

‘ Another soul ; your looks are more divine ;

‘ You speak a hero, and you move a god.’

Ant. Oh, thou hast fir’d me ! my soul’s up in arms,

And man's each part about me. Once again
That noble eagerness of fight has seiz'd me ;
That eagerness, with which I darted upward
To Cassius' camp. In vain the steepy hill
Oppos'd my way ; in vain a war of spears
Sung round my head, and planted all my shield ;
I won the trenches, while my foremost men
Lagg'd on the plain below.

Vent. Ye gods, ye gods,
For such another honour !

Ant. Come on, my soldier ;
Our hearts and arms are still the same. I long
Once more to meet our foes ; that thou and I,
Like Time and Death, marching before our troops,
May taste fate to 'em ; mow 'em out a passage,
And, ent'ring where the foremost squadrons yield,
Begin the noble harvest of the field. [*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, a grand Saloon.

Enter Cleopatra, Iras, and Alexas.

CLEOPATRA.

WHAT shall I do ; or whither shall I turn ?
Ventidius has o'ercome, and he will go.

Alex. He goes to fight for you.

Cleo. Then he would see me, ere he went to fight.
Flatter me not : if once he goes, he's lost,
And all my hopes destroy'd.

Alex. Does this weak passion
Become a mighty queen ?

Cleo. I am no queen.
Is this to be a queen, to be besieg'd
By yon insulting Roman, and to wait
Each hour the victor's chain ? These ills are small ;
For Antony is lost, and I can mourn
For nothing else but him. Now come, Octavius,
I have no more to lose ; prepare thy bands ;

I'm .

I'm fit to be a captive : Antony
Has taught my mind the fortune of a slave.

Iras. Call reason to assist you.

Cleo. I have none,

And none would have ; my love's a noble madness,
Which shows the cause deserv'd it. Moderate sorrow
Fits vulgar love, and for a vulgar man :

But I have lov'd with such transcendent passion,

I soar'd, at first, quite out of reason's view,

And now am lost above it.—' No, I'm proud

' 'Tis thus : would Antony could see me now ;

' Think you he would not sigh ? Though he must leave

' Sure he would sigh ; for he is noble-natur'd, [me

' And bears a tender heart : I know him well.

' Ah, no ! I know him not ; I knew him once,

' But now 'tis past.

' *Iras.* Let it be past with you :

' Forget him, Madam.

' *Cleo.* Never, never, *Iras.*

' He once was mine ; and once, though now 'tis gone,

' Leaves a faint image of possession still.

' *Alex.* Think him unconstant, cruel, and ungrateful.

' *Cleo.* I cannot : if I could, those thoughts were vain ;

' Faithless, ungrateful, cruel, though he be,

' I still must love him.'

Enter Charmion.

Now, what news, my Charmion ?

Will he be kind ? And will he not forsake me ?

Am I to live or die ? ' Nay, do I live ?

' Or am I dead ? For when he gave his answer,

' Fate took the word, and then I liv'd or dy'd.'

Char. I found him, Madam——

Cleo. A long speech preparing ?

If thou bring'st comfort, haste, and give it me ;

For never was more need.

Iras. I know he loves you.

Cleo. Had he been kind, her eyes had told me so,

Before her tongue could speak it : now she studies,

To soften what he said ; but give me death,

Just as he sent it, Charmion, undisguis'd,

And in the words he spoke.

Char. I found him then

Incompas'd round, I think, with iron statues,
 So mute, so motionless his soldiers stood,
 While awfully he cast his eyes about,
 And ev'ry leader's hopes and fears survey'd;
 Methought he look'd resolv'd, and yet not pleas'd.
 When he beheld me struggling in the crowd,
 He blush'd, and bade, make way.

Alex. There's comfort yet.

Char. Ventidius fix'd his eyes upon my passage
 Severely, as he meant to frown me back,
 And suddenly gave place. I told my message
 Just as you gave it, broken and disorder'd;
 I number'd in it all your sighs and tears;
 And while I mov'd your pitiful request,
 That you but only begg'd a last farewell,
 He fetch'd an inward groan, and ev'ry time
 I nam'd you, sigh'd, as if his heart were breaking,
 But shun'd my eyes, and guiltily look'd down.
 He seem'd not now that awful Antony
 Who shook an arm'd assembly with his nod;
 But making show as he would rub his eyes,
 Disguis'd and blotted out a falling tear.

Cleo. Did he then weep? And was I worth a tear?
 If what thou hast to say be not as pleasing,
 Tell me no more, but let me die contented.

Char. He bid me say, He knew himself so well,
 He could deny you nothing, if he saw you;
 And therefore——

Cleo. Thou would'st say, he would not see me.

Char. And therefore begg'd you not to use a power
 Which he could ill resist; yet he should ever
 Respect you as he ought.

Cleo. Is that a word

For Antony to use to Cleopatra?

Oh, that faint word, respect! how I disdain it!
 Disdain myself, for loving after it!

‘He should have kept that word for cold Octavia;
 ‘Respect is for a wife. Am I that thing,
 ‘That dull insipid lump, without desires,
 ‘And without pow'r to give 'em?’

Alex. You misjudge;
 You see through love, and that deludes your sight;

As what is streight, seems crooked through the water ;
 But I, who bear my reason undisturb'd,
 Can see this Antony, this dreaded man,
 A fearful slave, who fain would run away,
 And shuns his master's eyes ; if you pursue him,
 My life on't, he still drags a chain along,
 That needs must clog his flight.

Cleo. Could I believe thee——

Alex. By every circumstance I know he loves.
 True, he's hard prest, by int'rest and by honour ;
 Yet he but doubts, and parlies, and casts out
 Many a long look for succour.

Cleo. He sends word,
 He fears to see my face.

Alex. And would you more ?
 He shows his weakness who declines the combat ;
 And you must urge your fortune. Could he speak
 More plainly ? To my ears, the message sounds,
 Come to my rescue, Cleopatra, come ;
 Come, free me from Ventidius ; from my tyrant ;
 See me, and give me a pretence to leave him. [*A march.*
 I hear his trumpets. This way he must pass.
 Please you, retire a while ; I'll work him first,
 That he may bend more easy.

Cleo. You shall rule me ;
 But all, I fear, in vain. [*Exit with Char. and Iras.*

Alex. I fear so too ;
 Though I conceal'd my thoughts, to make her bold :
 But 'tis our utmost means, and fate befriend it.

[*Withdraws. A march till all are on.*

*Enter Liſtors with Fasces ; one bearing the eagle : then enter
 Anthony and Ventidius, followed by other commanders.*

Ant. Octavius is the minion of blind chance ;
 But holds from virtue nothing.

Vent. Has he courage ?

Ant. But just enough to season him from coward.
 Oh, 'tis the coldest youth upon a charge ;
 The most deliberate fighter ! If he ventures,
 (As in Ilyria once they say he did,
 To storm a town) 'tis when he cannot chuse ;
 When all the world have fixt their eyes upon him ;

And

And then he lives on that for seven years after,
But at a close revenge he never fails.

Vent. I hear'd you challeng'd him.

Ant. I did, Ventidius.

What think'st thou was his answer? 'Twas so tame.—
He said he had more ways than one to die;
I had not.

Vent. Poor!

Ant. He has more ways than one:

But he would chuse 'em all before that one.

Vent. He first would chuse an ague or a fever.

Ant. No; it must be an ague, not a fever:
He has not warmth enough to die by that.

Vent. Or old age and a bed.

Ant. Ay, there's his choice.

He would live, like a lamp, to the last wink,
And crawl upon the utmost verge of life.
Oh, Hercules! Why should a man like this,
Who dares not trust his fate for one great action,
Be all the care of Heav'n? Why should he lord it
O'er fourscore thousand men, of whom each one
Is braver than himself?

' *Vent.* You conquer'd for him:

' Philippi knows it; there you shar'd with him
' That empire, which your sword made all your own.

' *Ant.* Fool that I was, upon my eagle's wings
' I bore this wren, 'till I was tir'd with soaring,
' And now he mounts above me.
' Good Heav'n's, is this, is this the man who braves me?
' Who bids my age make way? Drives me before him;
' To the world's ridge, and sweeps me off like rubbish?

Vent. Sir, we lose time; the troops are mounted all.

Ant. Then give the word to march.

I long to leave this prison of a town,
To join thy legions; and, in open field,
Once more to show my face. Lead, my deliverer.

Enter Alexas.

Alex. Great emperor,
In mighty arms renown'd above mankind,
But, in soft pity to th' oppress'd, a god;
This message sends the mournful Cleopatra
To her departing lord.

Vent.

Vent. Smooth sycophant !

Alex. A thousand wishes, and ten thousand pray'rs,
Millions of blessings wait you to the wars ;
Millions of sighs and tears she sends you too,
And would have sent

' As may dear embraces to your arms,'
As many parting kisses to your lips ;
But those, she fears, have weary'd you already.

Vent. [*Aside.*] False crocodile !

Alex. And yet she begs not now, you would not leave
That were a wish too mighty for her hopes, [her,
And too presuming (for her low fortune, and your eb-
bing love,)

That were a wish for her most prosp'rous days,
Her blooming beauty, and your growing kindness.

Ant. [*Aside.*] Well, I must man it out—What would
the queen ?

Alex. First to these noble warriors, who attend
Your daring courage in the chace of fame,
(Too daring and too dang'rous for her quiet)
She humbly recommends all she holds dear,
All her own cares and fears, the care of you.

Vent. Yes, witness Actium.

Ant. Let him speak, Ventidius.

Alex. You, when his matchless valour bears him for-
With ardour too heroick, on his foes, [ward,
Fall down, as she would do, before his feet ;
Lie in his way, and stop the paths of death ;
Tell him, this god is not invulnerable,
That absent Cleopatra bleeds in him ;
And, that you may remember her petition,
She begs you wear these trifles, as a pawn,
Which, at your wish'd return, she will redeem

[*Gives jewels to the commanders.*]

With all the wealth of Ægypt.
This, to the great Ventidius she presents,
Whom she can never count her enemy,
Because he loves her lord.

Vent. Tell her, I'll none on't ;
I'm not ashamed of honest poverty ;
Not all the diamonds of the east can bribe
Ventidius from his faith. I hope to see

These

These, and the rest of all her sparkling store,
Where they shall more deservingly be plac'd.

Ant. And who must wear 'em then?

Vent. The wrong'd Octavia.

Ant. You might have spar'd that word.

Vent. And she that bribe.

Ant. But have I no remembrance?

Alex. Yes, a dear one;

Your slave, the queen——

Ant. My mistress.

Alex. Then your mistress.

Your mistress would, she says, have sent her soul,
But that you had long since; she humbly begs
This ruby bracelet, set with bleeding hearts,
(The emblems of her own) may bind your arm.

[*Presenting a bracelet.*]

Vent. Now, my best lord, in honour's name I ask you,
For manhood's sake, and for your own dear safety,
Touch not these poison'd gifts,
Infected by the sender; touch 'em not;
Myriads of bluest plagues lie underneath 'em,
And more than aconite has dipt the silk.

Ant. Nay, now you grow too cynical, Ventidius.
A lady's favours may be worn with honour.
What, to refuse her bracelet! On my soul,
When I lie pensive in my tent alone,
'Twill pass the wakeful hours of winter nights,
To tell these pretty beads upon my arm,
To count for every one a soft embrace,
A melting kiss at such and such a time;
And now and then the fury of her love,
When—— And what harm's in this?

Alex. None, none, my lord,
But what's to her, that now 'tis past for ever.

Ant. [*Going to tie it.*] We soldiers are so awkward——
Help me tie it.

Alex. In faith, my lord, we courtiers too are awkward
In these affairs; so are all men indeed;

'Ev'n I, who am not one.' But shall I speak?

Ant. Yes, freely.

Alex. Then, my lord, fair hands alone
Are fit to tie it; she who sent it can,

Vent.

Vent. Hell ! death ! this cunuch pandar ruins you.
You will not see her ?

[*Alexas whispers an attendant, who goes out.*]

Ant. But to take my leave.

Vent. Then I have wash'd an Æthiop. Y^eare undone !
Y^eare in the toils ! y^eate taken ! y^eare destroy'd !
Her eyes do Cæsar's work.

Ant. You fear too soon.

I'm constant to myself : I know my strength ;
And yet she shall not think me barbarous neither,
Born in the depths of Africk ; I'm a Roman,
Bred to the rules of soft humanity.
A guest, and kindly us'd, should bid farewell.

Vent. You do not know

How weak you are to her ; how much an infant ;
You are not proof against a smile or glance ;
A sigh will quite disarm you.

Ant. See, she comes !

Now you shall find your error. Gods, I thank you ;
I form'd the danger greater than it was.
And now 'tis near, 'tis lessen'd.

Vent. Mark the end yet.

Enter Cleopatra, Charmion, and Iras.

Ant. Well, Madam, we are met.

Cleo. Is this a meeting !

Then, we must part !

Ant. We must.

Cleo. Who says we must ?

Ant. Our own hard fates.

Cleo. We make those fates ourselves.

Ant. Yes, we have made 'em ; we have lov'd each other
Into our mutual ruin.

Cleo. The gods have seen my joys with envious eyes ;
' I have no friends in heav'n ;' and all the world,
(As 'twere the bus'ness of mankind to part us)
Is arm'd against my love ; ev'n you yourself
Join with the rest : you, you are arm'd against me.

Ant. I will be justified in all I do
To late posterity, and therefore, hear me ;
If I mix a lie
With any truth, reproach me freely with it ;
Else, favour me with silence.

Cleo.

Cleo. You command me,
And I am dumb.

Vent. I like this well : he shows authority.

Ant. That I derive my ruin
From you alone——

Cleo. Oh, Heav'ns ! I ruin you !

Ant. You promised me your silence, and you break it
Ere I have scarce begun.

Cleo. Well, I obey you.

Ant. When I beheld you first, it was in Egypt,
Ere Cæsar saw your eyes ; you gave me love,
And were too young to know it ; that I settled
Your father in his throne, was for your sake ;
I left th' acknowledgment for time to ripen.

Cæsar step'd in, and with a greedy hand
Pluck'd the green fruit, ere the first blush of red,

Yet cleaving to the bough. He was my lord,

And was, beside, too great for me to rival.

But I deserv'd you first, tho' he enjoy'd you.

When, after, I beheld you in Cilicia,

An enemy to Rome, I pardon'd you.

Cleo. I clear'd myself——

Ant. Again you break your promise.

I lov'd you still, and took your weak excuses,
Took you into my bosom, stain'd by Cæsar,
And not half mine : I went to Ægypt with you,
And hid me from the bus'ness of the world,
Shut out enquiring nations from my sight,
To give whole years to you.

Vent. Yes, to your shame be't spoken.

[*Aside.*

Ant. How I lov'd

Witness ye days and nights, and all ye hours,
That danc'd away with down upon your feet,
As all your bus'ness were to count my passion.
One day past by, and nothing saw but love ;
Another came, and still 'twas only love ;
The suns were weary'd out with looking on,
And I untir'd with loving.

I saw you ev'ry day, and all the day,
And ev'ry day was still but as the first ;
So eager was I still to see you more.

Vent. 'Tis all too true.

Ant.

Ant. Fulvia, my wife, grew jealous,
As she indeed had reason, rais'd a war
In Italy, to call me back.

Vent. But yet
You went not.

Ant. While within your arms I lay,
The world fell mouldring from my hands each hour,
And left me scarce a grasp, I thank your love for't.

Vent. Well push'd ; that last was home.

Clea. Yet may I speak ?

Ant. If I have urg'd a falsehood, yes ; else, not.
Your silence says I have not. Fulvia dy'd ;
(Pardon, you gods, with my unkindness dy'd.)
To set the world at peace, I took Octavia.
This Cæsar's sister ; in her pride of youth,
And flow'r of beauty did I wed that lady,
Whom blushing I must praise, altho' I left her.
You call'd ; my love obey'd the fatal summons :
This rais'd the Roman arms ; the cause was yours.
I would have fought by land, where I was stronger ;
You hinder'd it : yet, when I fought at sea,
Forsook me fighting ; and, Oh, stain to honour !
Oh, lasting shame ! I knew not that I fled,
But fled to follow you.

Vent. What haste she made to hoist her purple sails ;
And, to appear magnificent in flight,
Drew half our strength away.

Ant. All this you caus'd.
And, would you multiply more ruins on me ?
This honest man, my best, my only friend,
Has gather'd up the shipwreck of my fortunes ;
Twelve legions I have left, my last recruits,
And you have watch'd the news, and bring your eyes
To seize them too. If you have ought to answer,
Now speak, you have free leave.

Alex. She stands confounded :
Despair is in her eyes.

[*Aside.*

Vent. Now lay a sigh i'th' way, to stop his passage :
Prepare a tear, and bid it for his legions ;
'Tis like they shall be sold.

Clea. How shall I plead my cause, when you my judge
Already have condemn'd me ? Shall I bring

The love you bore me for my advocate ?
 That now is turn'd against me, that destroys me ;
 For love once past, is, at the best, forgotten,
 But oftner sours to hate: 'twill please my lord
 To ruin me, and therefore I'll be guilty.
 But, could I once have thought it would have pleas'd you,
 That you would pry, with narrow searching eyes
 Into my faults, severe to my destruction,
 And watching all advantages with care,
 That serve to make me wretched ? Speak, my lord,
 For I end here. Though I deserve this usage,
 Was it like you to give it ?

Ant. Oh, you wrong me,
 To think I sought this parting, or desir'd
 T' accuse you more than what will clear myself,
 And justify this breach.

Cleo. Thus low I thank you ;
 And since my innocence will not offend,
 I shall not blush to own it.

Vent. After this
 I think she'll blush at nothing.

Cleo. You seem griev'd,
 (And therein you are kind) that Cæsar first
 Enjoy'd my love, though you deserv'd it better.
 For, had I first been yours, it would have sav'd
 My second choice ; I never had been his,
 And ne'er had been but yours. But Cæsar first,
 You say, possess'd my love. Not so, my lord :
 He first possess'd my person, you my love ;
 Cæsar lov'd me ; but I lov'd Anthony.
 ' If I endur'd him after, 'twas because
 ' I judg'd it due to the first name of men ;
 ' And, half constrain'd, I gave, as to a tyrant,
 ' What he would take by force.'

Vent. Oh syren ! syren !
 Yet grant that all the love she boasts were true,
 Has she not ruin'd you ? I still urge that,
 The fatal consequence.

Cleo. The consequence indeed,
 For I dare challenge him, my greatest foe,
 To say it was design'd : 'tis true, I lov'd you,
 And kept you far from an uneasy wife,

Such

Such Fulvia was.

Yes, but he'll say, you left Octavia for me :
And can you blame me to receive that love,
Which quitted such desert for worthless me ?
How often have I wish'd some other Cæsar,
Great as the first, and as the second young,
Would court my love, to be refus'd for you ?

Vent. Words, words ! But Actium, Sir, rem ember
Actium.

Cleo. Ev'n there, I dare his malice. True, I counsell'd
To fight at sea ; but, I betray'd you not.
I fled, but not to the enemy. 'Twas fear ;
Would I had been a man, not to have fear'd,
For none would then have envy'd me your friendship,
Who envy me your love.

Ant. We're both unhappy ;
If nothing else, yet our ill fortune parts us.
Speak ! Would you have me perish by my stay ?

Cleo. If as a friend you ask my judgment, go ;
If as a lover, stay. If you must perish—
'Tis a hard word ; but stay.

Vent. See now the effects of her so boasted love !
She strives to drag you down to ruin with her ;
But, could she scape without you, Oh, how soon
Would she let go her hold, and haste to shore,
And never look behind !

Cleo. Then judge my love by this.

[Giving Anthony a writing.]

Could I have borne
A life or death, a happiness or woe
From yours divided, this had giv'n me means.

Ant. By Hercules, the writing of Octavius !
• I know it well : 'tis that proscribing hand,
• Young as it was, that led the way to mine,
• And left me but the second place in murder'—
See, see, Ventidius ! here he offers Ægypt,
And joins all Syria to it, as a present,
So, in requital, she forsakes my fortunes,
And joins her arms with his.

Cleo. And yet you leave me !
You leave me, Anthony ; and yet I love you.
Indeed I do : I have refus'd a kingdom,

D 2

That

That's a trifle ;
 For I could part with life, with any thing,
 But only you. Oh, let me die but with you !
 Is that a hard request ?

Ant. Next living with you,
 'Tis all that Heav'n can give.

' Alex. He melts ; we conquer. *[Aside.*

Cleo. No ; you shall go : your int'rest calls you hence ;
 Yes ; your dear int'rest pulls too strong for these
 Weak arms to hold you here—— *[Takes his hand.*
 Go ; leave me, foldier ;

(For you're no more a lover :) leave me dying ;
 Push me all pale and panting from your bosom,
 And when your march begins, let one run after,
 Breathless almost for joy, and cry, she's dead !
 The soldiers shout ; you then perhaps may sigh,
 And muster all your Roman gravity ;
 Ventidius chides, and straight your brow clears up,
 As I had never been.

Ant. Gods, 'tis too much ! too much for man to bear !

Cleo. What is't for me then,
 A weak forsaken woman, and a lover ?
 Here let me breathe my last ; envy me not
 This minute in your arms ! I'll die ' apace,
 ' As fast as e'er I can,' and end your trouble.

Ant. Die !—Rather let me perish ! Loosen'd nature
 Leap from its hinges, sink the props of Heav'n,
 And fall the skies to crush the nether world.

My Eyes ! my soul ! my all !—— *[Embraces her.*

' Vent. And what's this toy,
 ' In balance with your fortune, honour, fame ?

' Ant. What is't, Ventidius ! it out-weighs 'em all ;
 ' Why, we have more than conquer'd Cæsar now ;
 ' My queen's not only innocent, but loves me,
 ' This, this is she who drags me down to ruin !'
 But, could she scape without me, with what haste
 Would she let slip her hold, and make to shore,
 And never look behind !

Down on thy knees, blasphemous as thou art,
 And ask forgiveness of wrong'd innocence.

Vent. I'll rather die, than take it. Will you go ?

Ant. Go ! Whither ? Go from all that's excellent !

' Faith,

ALL FOR LOVE.

41

‘Faith, honour, virtue, all good things forbid,
 ‘That I should go from her, who sets my love
 ‘Above the price of kingdoms. Give, you gods,
 Give to your boy, your Cæsar;
 This rattle of a globe to play withal,
 This gu-gau world, and put him cheaply off :
 I’ll not be pleas’d with less than Cleopatra.

Cleo. She’s wholly yours. My heart’s so full of joy,
 That I shall do some wild extravagance
 Of love in public ; and the foolish world,
 Which knows not tenderness, will think me mad.

Vent. Oh, women ! women ! women ! All the gods
 Have not such pow’r of doing good to man,
 As you of doing harm. [Exit

Ant. Our men are arm’d.
 Unbar the gate that looks to Cæsar’s camp ;
 I would revenge the treachery he meant me ;
 And long security makes conquest easy.
 I’m eager to return before I go ;
 For all the pleasures I have known, beat thick
 On my remembrance. How I long for night !
 That both the sweets of mutual love may try,
 And triumph once o’er Cæsar ere we die. [Exeunt

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

*Enter Cleopatra, Charmion, Iras, Alexas, and a train of
 Egyptians ; Anthony and Romans. Cleopatra crowns
 Anthony.*

ANTHONY.

‘I Thought how those white arms would fold me in,
 ‘And strain me close and melt me into love ;
 ‘So pleas’d with that sweet image, I sprung forwards,
 ‘And added all my strength to every blow.
 ‘*Cleo.* Come to me, come, my soldier, to my arms,
 ‘You’ve been too long away from my embraces ;
 ‘But, when I have you fast, and all my own,
 ‘With broken murmurs, and with amorous sighs,
 ‘I’ll say, you are unkind, and punish you,
 ‘And mark you red with many an eager kiss.

D 3

Ant.

Ant. My brighter Venus !

Cleo. Oh, my greater Mars !

Ant. Thou join'st us well, my love.

• Suppose me come from the Phlegrean plains,
• Where gasping giants lay, cleft by my sword:
• And mountain tops par'd off each other blow,
• To bury those I slew ; ' receive me, goddess ;
• Let Cæsar spread his subtle nets, like Vulcan,
• In thy embraces I would be beheld
• By heav'n and earth at once,
• And make their envy what they meant their sport.
• Let those who took us blush : I would love on
• With awful state, regardless of their frowns,
• As their superior god.

There's no satiety of love in thee ;
Enjoy'd, thou still art new ; perpetual spring
Is in thy arms ; the ripen'd fruit but falls,
And blossoms rise to fill its empty place,
And I grow rich by giving.

Enter Ventidius, and stands apart.

Alex. Oh, now the dangers past ; your general comes,
He joins not in your joys, nor minds your triumphs :
But, with contracted brows, looks frowning on,
As envying your success.

Ant. Now, on my soul, he loves me, truly loves me ;
He never flatter'd me in any vice,
But awes me with his virtue ; even this minute
Methinks he has a right of chiding me.
Lead to the temple ; I'll avoid his presence,
It checks too strong upon me.

[Exeunt the rest.]

[As Anthony is going, Ventidius pulls him by the robe.]

Vent. Emperor !

Ant. 'Tis the old argument ; I pr'ythee spare me.

[Looking back.]

Vent. But this one hearing, emperor.

Ant. Let go

My robe ! or, by my father Hercules——

Vent. By Hercules's father—that's yet greater,
I bring you somewhat you would wish to know.

Ant. Thou seest we are observ'd ; attend me here,
And I'll return.

[Exit.]

Vent. I'm waning in his favour, yet I love him ;
I love

ALL FOR LOVE

43

I love this man, who runs to meet his ruin!
And sure the gods, like me, are fond of him:
His virtues lie so mingled with his crimes,
As would confound their choice to punish one,
And not reward the other.

Enter Anthony.

Ant. We can conquer,
You see, without your aid.
We have dislodg'd their troops,
' They look on us at distance, and, like curs
' Scap'd from the lion's paws, they bay far off,
' And lick their wounds, and faintly threaten war.'
Five thousand Romans, with their faces upward,
Lie breathless on the plain.

Vent. 'Tis well: and he
Who lost 'em, could have spar'd ten thousand more,
Yet if, by this advantage, you could gain
An easier peace, while Cæsar doubts the chance
Of arms—

Ant. Oh, think not on't, Ventidius!
The boy pursues my ruin; he'll no peace!
' His malice is considerate in advantage;
' Oh, he's the coolest murderer! so staunch,
' He kills and keeps his temper.'

Vent. Have you no friend
In all his army, who has power to move him;
Mecænas, or Agrippa, might do much.

Ant. They're both too deep in Cæsar's interests,
' We'll work it out by dint of sword, or perish!

Vent. Fain I would find some other.

Ant. Thank thy love.
' Some four or five such victories as this
' Will save thy farther pains.

Vent. Expect no more; Cæsar is on his guard.
' I know, Sir, you have conquer'd against odds;
' But still you draw supplies from one poor town,
' And of Egyptians; he has all the world,
' And, at his beck, nations come pouring in,
' To fill the gaps you make.' Pray, think again.

Ant. Why dost thou drive me from myself, to search
For foreign aids; to hunt my memory,
And range all o'er a wide and barren place.

To

ALL FOR LOVE.

To find a friend? The wretched have no friends—

Yet I had one, the bravest youth of Rome,

Whom Cæsar loves beyond the love of women,

‘He could resolve his mind, as fire does wax,

From that hard rugged image melt him down

And mould him in what softer form he pleas’d.’

Vent. Him would I see; that man of all the world!

Just such a one we want.

Ant. He lov’d me too;

It was his soul; he liv’d not but in me;

We were so clos’d within each other’s breasts;

The rivets were not found that join’d us first,

‘That does not reach us yet: We were so mixt

As meeting streams, both to ourselves were lost;

‘We were one mass; we could not give or take

But from the same: for he was I, I he.

‘*Vent.* He moves as I would wish him.

[*Aside.*

‘*Ant.* After this,

I need not tell his name: ’twas Dolabella.

Vent. He’s now in Cæsar’s camp.

Ant. No matter where,

Since he’s no longer mine. He took unkindly

That I forbade him Cleopatra’s fight;

Because I fear’d he lov’d her. ‘He confess

‘He had a warmth, which, for my sake, he stifled;

‘For ’twere impossible that two so one

Should not have lov’d the same. When he departed,

‘He took no leave; and that confirm’d my thoughts.

‘*Vent.* It argues that he lov’d you more than her,

‘Else he had staid; but he perceiv’d you jealous,

‘And would not grieve his friend: I know he loves you.

‘*Ant.* I should have seen him then ere now.

‘*Vent.* Perhaps

‘He has thus long been lab’ring for your peace.

‘*Ant.* Would he were here.

Vent. Would you believe he lov’d you?

I read your answer in your eyes you would.

Not to conceal it longer, he has sent

A messenger from Cæsar’s camp, with letters.

Ant. Let him appear.

Vent. I’ll bring him instantly.

[*Exit Ventidius, and re-enters immediately with Dolabella.*

Ant.

ALL FOR LOVE

41

Ant. 'Tis he himself, himself! by holy friendship!

[Runs to embrace him]

Art thou return'd at last, my better half!

Come, give me all myself!

' Let me not live,

' If the young bridegroom, longing for his night,

' Was ever half so fond.'

Dol. I must be silent, for my soul is busy
About a nobler work. She's new come home;
Like a long absent man, and wanders o'er
Each room, a stranger to her own, to look
If all be safe.

Ant. Thou hast what's left of me;

' For I am now so sunk from what I was,

' Thou find'st me at my lowest water-mark,

' The rivers that ran in, and rais'd my fortunes,

' Are all dry'd up, or take another course:

' What I have left is from my native spring;

' I've still a heart that swells, in scorn of fate,

' And lifts me to my banks.

' *Dol.* Still you are lord of all the world to me.

' *Ant.* Why, then I yet am so, for thou art all.

' If I had any joy when thou wert absent,

' I grudg'd it to myself; nought thought I rob'd

' Thee of thy part.' But, Oh, my Dolabella!

Thou hast beheld me other than I am——

Hast thou not seen my morning chambers fill'd

With scepter'd slaves, who waited to salute me?

With eastern monarchs, who forgot the sun

To worship my uprising? Menial kings

' Ran courting up and down my palace-yard,'

Stood silent in my presence, watch'd my eyes,

And, at my least command, all started out,

Like racers to the goal.

Dol. Slaves to your fortune.

Ant. Fortune is Cæsar's now; and what am I?

Vent. What you have made yourself; I will not flatter.

Ant. Is this friendly done?

Dol. Yes, when his end is so, I must join with him;

Indeed I must, and yet you must not chide:

Why am I else your friend?

Ant. Take heed, young man.

How

How thou upbraid'st my love ! The queen has eyes,
And thou too hast a soul ! Canst thou remember
When, swell'd with hatred, thou beheld'st her first,
As accessory to thy brother's death ?

Dol. Spare my remembrance ! 'twas a guilty day,
And still the blush hangs here.

Ant. To clear herself,
For sending him no aid, she came from Egypt,
Her galley down the silver Sydnos row'd,
The tackling silk, the streamers wav'd with gold ;
The gentle winds were lodg'd in purple sails :
Her nymphs, like Nereids, round her couch were plac'd ;
Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.

Dol. No more ! I would not hear it !

Ant. Oh, you must !
She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,
And cast a look so languishingly sweet,
As if, secure of all beholders hearts,
Neglecting she could take 'em ! Boys, like Cupids,
Stood fanning with their painted wings, the winds
That play'd about her face : but if she smil'd,
A darting glory seem'd to blaze abroad :
That men's desiring eyes were never weary'd,
But hung upon the object ! To soft flutes
The silver oars kept time ; and while they play'd,
The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight,
And both to thought. 'Twas heav'n, or somewhat more !
For she so charm'd all hearts, that gazing crowds
Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath
To give their welcome voice :
Then, Dolabella, where was then thy soul ?
Was not thy fury quite disarm'd with wonder ?
Didst thou not shrink behind me from those eyes,
And whisper in my ear, Oh, tell her not
That I accus'd her of my brother's death !

Dol. And should my weakness be a plea for yours ?
Mine was an age when love might be excus'd,
• When kindly warmth, and when my springing youth
• Made it a debt to nature.' Yours——

Vent. Speak boldly.

Yours, he would say, in your declining age,
• When no more heat was left but what you forc'd,
• When

' When all the sap was needful for the trunk,
 ' When it went down, then they constrain'd the course,
 ' And robb'd from nature to supply desire;
 In you (I would not use so harsh a word)
 'Tis but plain dotage.

Ant. Ha!

Dol. 'Twas urg'd too home.
 But yet the loss was private that I made;
 'Twas but myself I lost: I lost no legions;
 I had no world to lose, no people's love.

Ant. This from a friend?

Dol. Yes, Antony, a true one;
 A friend so tender, that each word I speak
 Stabs my own heart, before it reach your ear.
 Oh, judge me not less kind because I chide:
 To Cæsar I excuse you.

Ant. Oh, ye gods!

Have I then liv'd to be excus'd to Cæsar!

Dol. As to your equal.

Ant. Well, he's but my equal:
 While I wear this, he never shall be more.

Dol. I bring conditions from him.

Ant. Are they noble?

Methinks thou should'st not bring 'em else; yet he
 Is full of deep dissembling; knows no honour
 Divided from his int'rest. ' Fate mistook him;
 ' For nature meant him for an usurer;
 He's fit, indeed, to buy, not conquer kingdoms.

Vent. Then, granting this,

What pow'r was theirs who wrought so hard a tempest
 To honourable terms?

Ant. It was my Dolabella, or some god.

Dol. Not I; nor yet Mæcenæus, nor Agrippa:
 They were your enemies; and I a friend
 Too weak alone; yet 'twas a Roman deed.

Ant. 'Twas like a Roman done: Show me that man
 Who has preserv'd my life, my love, my honour;
 Let me but see his face.

Vent. That task is mine,
 And, Heav'n, thou know'st how pleasing. [Exit Vent.

Dol. You'll remember
 To whom you stand oblig'd?

Ant.

ALL FOR LOVE

Ant. When I forget it,
Be thou unkind, and that's my greatest curse.
My queen shall thank him too.

Dol. I fear she will not.

Ant. But she shall do't. The queen, my Dolabella!
Hast thou not still some grudgings of thy fever?

Dol. I would not see her lost.

Ant. When I forsake her,
Leave me, my better stars; for she has truth
Beyond her beauty. Caesar tempted her,
At no less price than kingdoms, to betray me:
But she resisted all: and yet thou chid'st me
For loving her too well. Could I do so?

Dol. Yes; there's my reason.

*Re-enter Ventidius, with Octavia, leading Antony's two
little Daughters.*

Ant. Where? — Octavia there! [*Starting back,*

Vent. What is the poison to you? a disease?
Look on her; view her well, and those she brings:
Are they all strangers to your eyes? Has nature
No secret call, no whisper: they are yours?

Dol. For shame, my lord, if not for love, receive 'em
With kinder eyes. If you confess a man,
Meet 'em, embrace 'em, bid 'em welcome to you.

• Your arms should open, ev'n without your knowledge,
• To clasp 'em in; your feet should turn to wings,
• To bear you to 'em; and your eyes dart out,
• And aim a kiss, ere you could reach their lips.

Ant. I stood amaz'd to think how they came hither.

Vent. I sent for 'em; I brought them in, unknown
To Cleopatra's guards.

Dol. Yet are you cold?

Oct. Thus long I have attended for my welcome;
Which, as a stranger, sure I might expect.
Who am I?

Ant. Caesar's sister.

Oct. That's unkind!

Had I been nothing more than Caesar's sister,
Know, I had still remain'd in Caesar's camp;
But your Octavia, your much injur'd wife,
Tho' banish'd from your bed, driv'n from your house,
In spite of Caesar's sister, still is yours.

'Tis true, I have a heart disdains your coldness,
 And prompts me not to seek what you should offer :
 But a wife's virtue still surmounts that pride :
 I come to claim you as my own ; to show
 My duty first, to ask, nay beg, your kindness ;
 Your hand, my lord ; 'tis mine, and I will have it.

{Taking his hand.

Vent. Do, take it, thou deserv'st it.

Dol. On my soul,

And so she does : ' She's neither too submissive,
 ' Nor yet too haughty ; but so just a mean
 ' Shows, as it ought, a wife, and Roman too.'

Ant. I fear, Octavia, you have begg'd my life.

Oct. Begg'd it, my lord ?

Ant. Yes, begg'd it, my ambassadrefs ;
 Poorly and basely begg'd it of your brother.

Oct. Poorly and basely, I could never beg ;
 Nor could my brother grant.

Ant. Shall I, who, to my kneeling slave, could say,
 Rise up, and be a king ; shall I fall down
 And cry, Forgive me, Cæsar ? ' Shall I set
 ' A man, my equal, in the place of Jove,
 ' As he could give me being ?' No ; that word,
 Forgive, would choak me up,
 And die upon my tongue.

Dol. You shall not need it.

Ant. I will not need it. Come, you've all betray'd
 me—

' My friend too ! To receive some vile conditions.'
 My wife has bought me, with her prayers and tears ;
 And now I must become her branded slave.
 In ev'ry peevish mood she will upbraid
 The life she gave. If I but look awry,
 She cries, I'll tell my brother.

Oct. My hard fortune

Subjects me still to your unkind mistakes.
 But the conditions I have brought are such
 You need not blush to take : I love your honour,
 Because 'tis mine. It never shall be said
 Octavia's husband was her brother's slave.
 Sir, you are free ; free ev'n from her you loath ;
 For, tho' my brother bargains for your love,

E

Makes

Makes me the price and cement of your peace,
 I have a soul like yours ; I cannot take
 Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve.
 I'll tell my brother we are reconcil'd ;
 He shall draw back his troops, and you shall march
 To rule the east : I may be dropt at Athens ;
 No matter where, I never will complain,
 But only keep the barren name of wife,
 And rid you of the trouble.

Vent. Was ever such a strife of fullen honour !

Both scorn to be oblig'd.

Del. Oh, she has touch'd him in the tender'st part.
 See how he reddens with despight and shame
 To be out-done in generosity !

Vent. See how he winks ! how he dries up a tear
 ' That fain would fall !'

Ant. Octavia, I have heard you, and must praise
 The greatness of your soul ;
 But cannot yield to what you have propos'd :
 For I can ne'er be conquer'd but by love ;
 And you do all for duty. You would free me,
 And would be dropt at Athens ; was't not so ?

Oct. It was, my lord.

Ant. Then I must be oblig'd
 To one who loves me not ; who, to herself,
 May call me thankless and ungrateful man.
 I'll not endure it ; no.

Vent. I'm glad it pinches there.

Oct. Would you triumph o'er poor Octavia's virtue ?
 That pride was all I had to bear me up ;
 That you might think you ow'd me for your life,
 And ow'd it to my duty, not my love.
 ' I have been injur'd, and my haughty soul
 ' Could brook but ill the man who slights my bed.'

Ant. Therefore you love me not.

Oct. Therefore, my lord,
 I should not love you.

Ant. Therefore you would leave me.

Oct. And therefore I should leave you—if I could.

Del. Her soul's too great, after such injuries,
 To say she loves ; and yet she lets you see it.
 Her modesty and silence plead her cause.

Ant.

Ant. Oh, Dolabella ! which way shall I turn ?
 I find a secret yielding in my soul :
 But Cleopatra, who would die with me,
 Must she be left ? Pity pleads for Octavia ;
 But does it not plead more for Cleopatra ?

Vent. Justice and pity both plead for Octavia ;
 For Cleopatra, neither.

One would be ruin'd with you ; but she first
 Had ruin'd you : the other, you have ruin'd,
 And yet she would preserve you.
 In ev'ry thing their merits are unequal.

Ant. Oh, my distracted soul !

Off. Sweet Heav'n, compose it.

Come, come, my lord, if I can pardon you,
 Methinks you should accept it. Look on these ;
 Are they not yours ? Or stand they thus neglected
 As they are mine ? Go to him, children, go,
 Kneel to him, take him by the hand, speak to him ;
 ' For you may speak, and he may own you too,
 ' Without a blush ; and so he cannot all
 ' His children. Go, I say, and pull him to me,
 ' And pull him to yourselves, from that bad woman :
 You, Agrippina, hang upon his arms ;
 And you, Antonia, clasp about his waist ;
 If he will shake you off, if he will dash you
 Against the pavement, you must bear it, children ;
 For you are mine, and I was born to suffer.

[*Here the Children go to him, &c.*]

Vent. Was ever fight so moving ! Emperor !

Dol. Friend !

Off. Husband !

Both Child. Father !

Ant. I am vanquish'd : Take me
 Octavia ; take me, children ; share me all.

[*Embracing them.*]

I've been a thriftless debtor to your loves,
 And run out much in riot, from your stock ;
 But all shall be amended.

Off. Oh, blest hour !

Dol. Oh, happy change !

Vent. My joy stops at my tongue !

‘ But it has found two channels here for one,
 ‘ And bubbles out above.’

Ant. [To *Oët.*] This is thy triumph; lead me where
 thou wilt,

Even to thy brother’s camp.

Oët. All there are yours.

Enter Alexas, hastily.

Alex. The queen, my mistress, Sir, and yours —

Ant. ‘Tis past. *Oëtavia*, you shall stay this night;
 To-morrow, *Cæsar* and we are one.

[[*Ex. leading Oët. Dol. and the Children follow.*

Vent. There’s news for you! Run, my officious eu-
 Be sure to be the first; haste forward: [such,

Haste, my dear eunuch, haste, [Exit.

‘ *Alex.* This downright fighting fool, this thick-skull’d
 ‘ This blunt unthinking instrument of death, [hero,
 ‘ With plain dull virtue, has out-gone my wit.
 ‘ Pleasure forsook my early’st infancy;
 ‘ The luxury of others robb’d my cradle,
 ‘ And ravish’d thence the promise of a man.
 ‘ Cast out from nature, disinherited
 ‘ Of what her meanest children claim by kind;
 ‘ Yet, greatness kept me from contempt: that’s gone.
 ‘ Had *Cleopatra* follow’d my advice,
 ‘ Then he had been betray’d, who now forsakes.
 ‘ She dies for love; but she has known its joys:
 ‘ Gods, is this just, that I, who know no joys,
 ‘ Must die, because she loves?

‘ *Enter Cleopatra, Charmion, Iras, and train.*
 ‘ Oh, Madam, I have seen what blasts my eyes!
 ‘ *Oëtavia*’s here!

‘ *Cleo.* Peace with that raven’s note!
 ‘ I know it too; and now am in
 ‘ The pangs of death.

‘ *Alex.* You are no more a queen;
 ‘ *Ægypt* is lost.

‘ *Cleo.* What tell’st thou me of *Ægypt*?
 ‘ My life, my soul is lost! *Oëtavia* has him!
 ‘ Oh, fatal name to *Cleopatra*’s love!
 ‘ My kisses, my embraces now are hers;
 ‘ While I——But thou hast seen my rival; speak,
 ‘ Does she deserve this blessing? Is she fair?

‘ Bright

- Bright as a goddess ? And is all perfection
- Confin'd to her ? It is. Poor I was made
- Of that coarse matter, which, when she was finish'd,
- The gods threw by, for rubbish.
- *Alex.* She is, indeed, a very miracle.
- *Cleo.* Death to my hopes, a miracle !
- *Alex.* A miracle— [Bowing.
- I mean of goodness ; for in beauty, Madam,
- You make all wonder cease.
- *Cleo.* I was too rash :
- Take this in part of recompence. But, Oh,
- I fear thou flatterest me. [Giving a ring.
- *Char.* She comes ! She's here !
- *Iras.* Fly, Madam, Cæsar's sister !
- *Cleo.* Were she the sister of the thund'rer Jove,
- And bore her brother's light'ning in her eyes,
- Thus would I face my rival.

Enter Octavia with Ventidius, Oct. bears up to Cleo.

- Oct.* I need not ask if you are Cleopatra.
- Your haughty carriage—
- *Cleo.* Shows I am a queen.
- Nor need I ask who you are.
- *Oct.* A Roman :
- A name that makes and can unmake a queen.
- *Cleo.* Your lord, the man who serves me, is a Roman.
- *Oct.* He was a Roman, till he lost that name.
- To be a slave in Ægypt ; but I come
- To free him hence.
- *Cleo.* Peace, peace, my lover's Juno.
- When he grew weary of that household-clog,
- He chose my easier bonds.
- *Oct.* I wonder not
- Your bonds are easy ; you have long been practis'd
- In that lascivious art. He's not the first
- For whom you spread your snares : let Cæsar witness.
- *Cleo.* I lov'd not Cæsar ; 'twas but gratitude
- I paid his love ; the worst your malice can,
- Is but to say the greatest of mankind
- Has been my slave. The next, but far above him
- In my esteem, is he whom law call's yours,
- But whom his love made mine.

‘ *Oct.* I would view nearer [Coming up close to her.]

‘ That face, which has so long usurp’d my right,

‘ To find th’ inevitable charms, that catch

‘ Mankind so sure, that ruin’d my dear lord.

‘ *Cleo.* Oh, you do well to search ; for had you known

‘ But half these charms, you had not lost his heart.

‘ *Oct.* Far be their knowledge from a Roman lady,

‘ Far from a modest wife. Shame of our sex !

‘ Dost thou not blush, to own those black endearments

‘ That make sin pleasing ?

‘ *Cleo.* You may blush, you want ’em.

‘ If bounteous nature, if indulgent heav’n,

‘ Have given me charms to please the bravest man,

‘ Should I not thank ’em ? Should I be ashamed,

‘ And not be proud ? I am, that he has lov’d me ;

‘ And, when I love not him, heav’n change this face

‘ For one like that.

‘ *Oct.* Thou lov’st him not so well.

‘ *Cleo.* I love him better, and deserve him more.

‘ *Oct.* You do not ; cannot : you have been his ruin.

‘ Who made him cheap at Rome, but Cleopatra ?

‘ Who made him scorn’d abroad, but Cleopatra ?

‘ At Actium, who betray’d him ? Cleopatra.

‘ Who made his children orphans, and poor me

‘ A wretched widow ? Only Cleopatra.

‘ *Cleo.* Yet she who loves him best is Cleopatra.

‘ If you have suffer’d, I have suffer’d more.

‘ You bear the specious title of a wife,

‘ To gild your cause, and draw the pitying world

‘ To favour it : the world contemns poor me ;

‘ For I have lost my honour, lost my fame,

‘ And stain’d the glory of my royal house,

‘ And all to bear the branded name of mistress.

‘ There wants but life, and that too I would lose

‘ For him I love.

‘ *Oct.* Be’t so then ; take thy wish. [*Exit cum suis.*]

‘ *Cleo.* And ’tis my wish.

‘ Now he is lost for whom alone I liv’d.

‘ My sight grows dim, and every object dances,

‘ And swims before me, in the maze of death.

‘ My spirits, while they were oppos’d, kept up ;

‘ They could not sink beneath a rival’s scorn ;

‘ But now she’s gone they faint.

- ' *Alex.* Mine have had leisure
 ' To recollect their strength, and furnish counsel,
 ' To ruin her; who else must ruin you.
 ' *Cleo.* Vain promiser!
 ' Lead me, my Charmion; nay, your hand too, *Iras.*
 ' My grief has weight enough to sink you both.
 ' Conduct me to some solitary chamber,
 ' And draw the curtains round;
 ' Then leave me to myself, to take alone
 ' My fill of grief:
 ' There I till death will his unkindness weep:
 ' As harmless infants moan themselves asleep.'
- [*Exeunt.*]

A C T IV.

SCENE, *A Saloon.*

Enter Antony and Dolabella.

DOLABELLA.

WHY would you shift it from yourself on me?
 Can you not tell her you must part?

Ant. I cannot.

I could pull out an eye, and bid it go,
 And t'other should not weep. Oh, Dolabella,
 How many deaths are in this word depart!
 I dare not trust my tongue to tell her so:
 One look of hers would thaw me into tears,
 And I should melt till I were lost again.

Dol. Then let Ventidius;
 He's rough by nature.

Ant. Oh, he'll speak too harshly;
 He'll kill her with the news: thou, only thou.

Dol. Nature has cast me in so soft a mould,
 That 'but to hear a story feign'd for pleasure
 'Of some sad lover's death, moistens my eyes,
 'And robs me of my manhood.'——I should speak
 So faintly; with such fear to grieve her heart,
 She'd not believe it earnest,

Ant. Therefore; therefore
 Thou only, thou art fit: Think thyself me,

And:

And when thou speak'st (but let it first be long).
Take off the edge from every sharper sound,
And let our parting be as gently made
As other loves begin. Wilt thou do this?

Dol. What you have said so sinks into my soul,
That, if I must speak, I shall speak just so.

Ant. I leave you then to your sad task: Farewel.
I sent her word to meet you.

[Goes to the door, and comes back.]

I forgot;

Let her be told, I'll make her peace with mine:
Her crown and dignity shall be preserv'd,
If I have pow'r with Cæsar—Oh, be sure
To think on that.

Dol. Fear not, I will remember.

[Antony goes again to the door, and comes back.]

Ant. And tell her, too, how much I was constrain'd;
I did not this, but with extremest force.

Desire her not to hate my memory,
For I still cherish hers;—insist on that.

Dol. Trust me, I'll not forget it.

Ant. Then that's all. *[Goes out, and returns again.]*

Wilt thou forgive my fondness this once more?

Tell her, tho' we shall never meet again,

If I should hear she took another love,

The news would break my heart---Now I must go;

For every time I have return'd, I feel

My soul more tender; and my next command

Would be to bid her stay, and ruin both.

[Exit.]

Dol. Men are but children of a larger growth,
Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
And full as craving too, and full as vain;
And yet the soul, shut up in her dark room,
Viewing so clear abroad, at home sees nothing;
But, like a mole in earth, busy and blind,
Works all her folly up, and casts it outward
To the world's open view: Thus I discover'd,
And blam'd the love of ruin'd Antony;
Yet wish that I were he, to be so ruin'd.

Enter Ventidius above.

Vent. Alone, and talking to himself! Concern'd too!
Perhaps my guess is right; he lov'd her once,
And may pursue it still.

Dol.

Dol. Oh, friendship! friendship!
 Ill canst thou answer this; and reason, worse:
 Unfaithful in th' attempt; hopeless to win:
 And, if I win, undone. Mere madness all.
 And yet th' occasion fair. What injury
 To him, to wear the robe which he throws by?

Vent. None, none at all. This happens as I wish,
 To ruin her yet more with Antony. [*Aside.*
Enter Cleopatra, talking with Alexas; Charmion, Iras,
on the other side.

Dol. She comes! What charms have sorrow on that
 face!

Sorrow seems pleas'd to dwell with so much sweetness;
 Yet, now and then, a melancholy smile
 Breaks loose, like lightning in a winter's night,
 And shows a moment's day.

Vent. If she should love him too! her eunuch there!
 That porc'piscie bodes ill weather. Draw, draw nearer,
 Sweet devil, that I may hear.

Alex. Believe me; try

[*Dolabella goes over to Charmion and Iras; seems
 to talk with them.*

To make him jealous; jealousy is like
 A polish'd glass held to the lips when life's in doubt:
 If there be breath, 'twill catch the damp and show it.

Cleo. I grant you jealousy's a proof of love,
 But 'tis a weak and unavailing medicine;
 ' It puts out the disease, and makes it show,
 ' But has no pow'r to cure.'

Alex. 'Tis your last remedy, and strongest too:
 And then this Delabella, who so fit
 To practise on? He's handsome, valiant, young,
 And looks as he were laid for nature's bait,
 To catch weak women's eyes.

He stands already more than half suspected
 Of loving you: The least kind word or glance,
 You give this youth, will kindle him with love;
 Then, like a burning vessel set adrift,
 You'll send him down amain before the wind,
 To fire the heart of jealous Antony.

Cleo. Can I do this? Ah, no; my love's so true,
 That I can neither hide it where it is,

Nor

Nor show it where it is not. 'Nature meant me
 ' A wife; a filly, harmless, household dove,
 ' Fond without art, and kind without deceit;
 ' But fortune, that has made a mistress of me,
 ' Has thrust me out to the wide world, unfurnish'd
 ' Of falsehood to be happy.'

Alex. Force yourself.

Th' event will be, your lover will return
 Doubly desirous to possess the good
 Which once he fear'd to lose.

Cleo. I must attempt it;

But, Oh, with what regret!

[*Exit Alex. (She comes up to Dolabella.)*]

Fent. So now the scene draws near; they're in my reach.

Cleo. [*To Dol.*] Discouraging with my women! Might
 Share in your entertainment? [not I]

Char. You have been
 The subject of it, Madam.

Cleo. How! and how?

Iras. Such praises of your beauty!

Cleo. Mere poetry.

Your Roman wits, your Gallus and Tibullus,
 Have taught you this from Cytheris and Delia.

Dol. Those Roman wits have never been in Egypt,
 Cytheris and Delia else had been unsung:
 I, who have seen——had I been born a poet,
 Should chuse a nobler name.

Cleo. You flatter me.

But, 'tis your nation's vice: all of your country
 Are flatterers, and all false. Your friend's like you.
 I'm sure he sent you not to speak these words.

Dol. No, Madam; yet he sent me ——

Cleo. Well, he sent you ——

Dol. Of a less pleasing errand.

Cleo. How less pleasing?

Less to yourself, or me?

Dol. Madam, to both;

For you must mourn, and I must grieve to cause it.

Cleo. You Charmion and your fellow, stand at distance.
 Hold up, my spirits. [*Aside.*]———Well, now your
 mournful matter;

For I'm prepar'd, perhaps can guess it, too.

Dol.

Dol. I wish you would; for 'tis a thankless office
To tell ill news: and I, of all your sex,
Most fear displeasing you.

Cleo. Of all your sex,
I soonest could forgive you, if you should.

Vent. Most delicate advances! Woman! woman!
Dear, damn'd, inconstant sex!

Cleo. In the first place,
I am to be forsaken; is't not so?

Dol. I wish I could not answer to that question.

Cleo. Then pass it o'er, because it troubles you:
'I should have been more griev'd another time.'
Next, I'm to lose my kingdom—Farewel, Egypt.
Yet, is there any more?

Dol. Madam, I fear
Your too deep sense of grief has turn'd your reason.

Cleo. No, no, I'm not run mad; I can bear fortune:
And love may be expell'd by other love,
As poisons are by poisons.

Dol. ——— You o'erjoy me, Madam,
To find your griefs so moderately borne.
You've heard the worst; all are not false, like him.

Cleo. No; heav'n forbid they should.

Dol. Some men are constant.

Cleo. And constancy deserves reward, that's certain.

Dol. Deserves it not; but give it leave to hope.

Vent. I'll swear thou hast my leave. I have enough:
'But how to manage this! Well, I'll consider.' [*Exit.*]

Dol. I came prepar'd,
To tell you heavy news; news, which I thought
Would fright the blood from your pale cheeks to hear:
But you have met it with a cheerfulness
That makes my task more easy; and my tongue,
Which on another's message was employ'd,
Would gladly speak its own.

Cleo. Hold, Dolabella.
First tell me, were you chosen by my lord?
Or sought you this employment?

Dol. He pick'd me out; and, as his bosom-friend,
He charg'd me with his words.

Cleo. The message then
I know was tender, and each accent smooth,
To mollify that rugged word Depart.

Dol.

Dol. Oh! you mistake: He chose the harshest words;
 ' With fiery eyes, and with contracted brows,
 He coin'd his face in the severest stamp;
 And fury shook his fabrick like an earthquake:
 He heav'd for vent, and burst like bellowing Ætna,
 In sounds scarce human, " Hence, away for ever:
 Let her begone, the blot of my renown,
 And bane of all my hopes:

[All the time of this speech, Cleopatra seems more and more concerned, till she sinks quite down.]

Let her be driv'n as far as men can think
 From man's commerce: She'll poison to the center."

Cleo. Oh, I can bear no more! *[Faints.]*

Dol. Help, help! Oh, wretch! Oh, cursed, cursed
 What have I done! *[wretch!]*

' *Char.* Help, chase her temples, Iras.

' *Iras.* Bend, bend her forward quickly.'

Char. Heav'n be prais'd,

She comes again.

' *Cleo.* Oh, let him not approach me.'

Why have you brought me back to this loath'd being,

Th' abode of falshood, violated vows,

And injur'd love? For pity, let me go;

For, if there be a place of long repose,

I'm sure I want it. ' My disdainful lord

' Can never break that quiet, nor awake

' The sleeping soul, with hollowing in my tomb

' Such words as fright her hence.' Unkind, unkind.

Dol. Believe me, 'tis against myself I speak, *[Kneeling.]*

That sure deserves belief; I injur'd him:

My friend ne'er spoke those words. Oh, had you seen

How often he came back, and every time

With something more obliging and more kind,

To add to what he said; what dear farewells,

How almost vanquish'd by his love he parted,

And lean'd to what unwillingly he left:

I, traitor as I was, for love of you,

(But what can you not do, who made me false!)

I forg'd that lie: for whose forgiveness kneels

This self-accus'd, self-punish'd criminal.

Cleo. With how much ease believe we what we wish!

Rise, Dolabella; if you have been guilty,

I have

I have contributed, and too much love
 Has made me guilty too.
 Th' advance of kindness which I made, was feign'd,
 To call back fleeting love by jealousy;
 But 'twould not last. Oh, rather let me lose,
 Than so ignobly trifle with his heart.

Dol. I find your breast fenc'd round from human reach,
 Transparent as a rock of solid chrystal;
 Seen through, but never pierc'd. 'My friend, my friend!
 'What endless treasure hast thou thrown away;
 'And scatter'd, like an infant, in the ocean,
 'Vain sums of wealth which none can gather thence.'

Cleo. Could you not beg
 An hour's admittance to his private ear?
 'Like one who wanders through long barren wilds,
 'And yet foreknows no hospitable inn
 'Is near to succour hunger,
 'Eats his fill, before his painful march:
 'So would I feed a-while my famish'd eyes'
 Before we part; for I have far to go,
 If death be far, and never must return.

Ventidius, with Octavia, behind.

Vent. From whence you may discover—Oh, sweet, sweet!
 Would you indeed? the pretty hand in earnest?

Dol. I will, for this reward. [*Takes her hand.*

—Draw it not back,
 'Tis all I e'er will beg.

Vent. They turn upon us.

'*Octav.* What quick eyes has guilt!'

Vent. Seem not to have observ'd 'em, and go on.

They enter.

Dol. Saw you the emperor, Ventidius?

Vent. No.

I sought him; but I heard that he was private,
 None with him, but Hipparchus his freedman.

Dol. Know you his bus'ness?

Vent. Giving him instructions,
 And letters, to his brother Cæsar.

Dol. Well,

He must be found. [*Exeunt Dolabella and Cleopatra.*

Oct. Most glorious impudence!

Vent. She look'd, methought,

As she would say, Take your old man, Octavia ;
Thank you, I'm better here.

Well, but what use

Make we of this discovery ?

Oct. Let it die.

Vent. I pity Dolabella ; but she's dangerous :

- Her eyes have pow'r beyond Thessalian charms.
- To draw the moon from heav'n ; for eloquence,
- The sea-green syrens taught her voice their flatt'ry ;
- And, while she speaks, night steals upon the day,
- Unmark'd of those that hear : then she's so charming,
- Age buds at sight of her, and swells to youth :
- The holy priests gaze on her when she smiles ;
- And with heav'd hands, forgetting gravity,
- They bless her wanton eyes : even I, who hate her,
- With a malignant joy behold such beauty ;'

And, ' while I curse, desire it.' Antony

Must needs have some remains of passion still,

Which may ferment into a worse relapse,

If now not fully cur'd.——*But see he comes*——

• I know, this minute,

• With Cæsar he's endeavouring her peace.

• *Oct.* You have prevail'd :——*But for a farther purpose* *[Walks off.]*

• I'll prove how he will relish this discovery.

• What, make a strumpet's peace ! it swells my heart :

• It must not, sha' not be.

• *Vent.* His guards appear.

• Let me begin, and you shall second me.'

Enter Antony.

Ant. Octavia, I was looking you, my love :
What, are your letters ready ? I have giv'n
My last instructions.

Oct. Mine, my lord, are written.

Ant. Ventidius !

[Drawing him aside.]

Vent. My lord ?

Ant. A word in private.

When saw you Dolabella ?

Vent. Now, my lord,
He parted hence ; and Cleopatra with him.

Ant. Speak softly. 'Twas by my command he went,
To bear my last farewell.

Vent.

Vent. It look'd, indeed,
Like your farewell.

[*Aloud.*

Ant. More softly——My farewell!
What secret meaning have you in those words
Of my farewell? He did it by my order.

Vent. Then he obey'd your order, I suppose. [*Aloud.*
You bid him do it with all gentleness,
All kindness, and all——love.

Ant. How she mourn'd!
The poor forsaken creature!

Vent. She took it as she ought; she bore your parting
As she did Cæsar's, as she would another's,
Were a new love to come.

Ant. Thou dost belie her;
Most basely, and maliciously belie her. [*Aloud.*

Vent. I thought not to displease you; I have done.

Off. You seem disturb'd, my lord. [*Coming up.*

Ant. A very trifle.
Retire, my love.

Vent. It was indeed a trifle.
He sent——

Ant. No more. Look how thou disobey'st me;
Thy life shall answer it. [*Angrily.*

Off. Then 'tis no trifle.

Vent. [*To Off.*] 'Tis less; a very nothing: You too
as well as I, and therefore 'tis no secret. [*saw it.*

Ant. She saw it!

Vent. Yes: She saw young Dolabella——

Ant. Young Dolabella!

Vent. Young, I think him young,
And handsome too; and so do others think him.
But what of that? He went by your command,
Indeed 'tis probable, with some kind message;
For she receiv'd it graciously; she smil'd:
And then he grew familiar with her hand,
Squeez'd it, and worry'd it with ravenous kisses;
She blush'd, and sigh'd, and smil'd, and blush'd again;
At last she took occasion to talk softly.

' And brought her cheek up close, and lean'd on his:

' At which he whisper'd kisses back on hers;'

And then she cry'd aloud, That constancy
Should be rewarded.——This I saw and heard.

Ant. What woman was it, whom you heard and saw
So playful with my friend!
Not Cleopatra?

Vent. Ev'n she, my lord!

Ant. My Cleopatra?

Vent. Your Cleopatra;
Dolabella's Cleopatra:
Every man's Cleopatra.

Ant. 'Tis false.

Vent. I do not lie, my lord.

' Is this so strange? Should mistresses be left,
' And not provide against a time of change?
' You know she's not much us'd to lonely nights.

Ant. I'll think no more on't.'

I know 'tis false, and see the plot betwixt you.

' You needed not have gone this way, Octavia:

' What harms it you that Cleopatra's just?

' She's mine no more. I see; and I forgive:

' Urge it no farther, love.

Oct. Are you concern'd

' That she's found false?

Ant. I should be, were it so;

' For tho' 'tis past, I would not that the world

' Should tax my former choice: that I lov'd one

' Of so light note; but I forgive you both.'

Vent. What has my age deserv'd, that you should think
I would abuse your ears with perjury?

If heav'n be true, she's false.

Ant. Tho' heav'n and earth

Should witness it, I'll not believe her tainted.

Vent. I'll bring you then a witness

From hell to prove her so. Nay, go not back;

[*Seeing Alexas just entering, and starting back.*

For stay you must and shall.

Alex. What means my lord?

Vent. To make you do what most you hate; speak

' You are of Cleopatra's private counsel, [truth..

' Of her bed-counsel, her lascivious hours;

' Are conscious of each nightly change she makes,

' And watch her, as Chaldeans do the moon,

' Can tell what signs she passes through, what day.'

Alex. My noble lord.

Vent.

Vent. My most illustrious pandar,
 No fine set speech, no cadence, no turn'd periods,
 But a plain home-spun truth, is what I ask :
 I did, myself, o'erhear your queen make love
 To Dolabella. Speak ; for I will know,
 By your confession, what more past betwixt 'em ;
 How near the bus'ness draws to your employment ;
 And when the happy hour.

Ant. Speak truth, Alexas, whether it offend
 Or please Ventidius, care not. Justify
 Thy injur'd queen from malice. Dare his worst.

Oct. [*Aside.*] See how he gives him courage, how he
 'To find her false ! and shuts his eyes to truth, [*fears*
 'Willing to be misled !'

Alex. As far as love may plead for woman's frailty,
 Urg'd by desert and greatness of the lover ;
 So far (divine Octavia) may my queen
 Stand ev'n excus'd to you for loving him,
 Who is your lord : So far from brave Ventidius,
 May her past actions hope a fair report.

Ant. 'Tis well and truly spoken : Mark, Ventidius.

Alex. To you, most noble emperor, her strong passion
 Stands not excus'd, but wholly justified.
 Her beauty's charms alone, without her crown,
 From Ind and Merce drew the distant vows
 Of fighting kings ; and at her feet were laid
 The scepters of the earth, expos'd on heaps,
 To chuse where she would reign ;
 She thought a Roman only could deserve her ;
 And, of all Romans, only Antony.
 And, to be less than wife to you, disdain'd
 Their lawful passion.

Ant. 'Tis but truth.

Alex. And yet tho' love, and your unmatch'd desert,
 Have drawn her from the due regard of honour,
 At last, heav'n open'd her unwilling eyes
 To see the wrongs she offer'd fair Octavia,
 Whose holy bed she lawlessly usurp'd.
 The sad effects of this prosperous war,
 Confirm'd those pious thoughts.

Vent. [*Aside.*] Oh, wheel you there ?
 Observe him now ; the man begins to mend,

And talk substantial reason. Fear not, eunuch,
The emperor has giv'n thee leave to speak.

Alex. Else had I never dar'd t' offend his ears
With what the last necessity has urg'd
On my forsaken mistress; yet I must not
Presume to say her heart is wholly alter'd.

Ant. No, dare not for thy life, I charge thee, dare not
Pronounce that fatal word.

Oct. Must I bear this? Good heav'n, afford me patience!
[*Aside.*

Vent. On, sweet eunuch; my dear half man, proceed.

Alex. Yet Dolabella

Has lov'd her long; he, next my god-like lord,
Deserves her best; and should she meet his passion,
Rejected, as she is, by him she lov'd —

Ant. Hence, from my sight, for I can bear no more!
Let furies drag thee quick to hell! each torturing hand
Do thou employ, till Cleopatra comes,
Then join thou too, and help to torture her.

[*Exit Alexas thrust out by Antony.*

Oct. 'Tis not well!

Indeed, my lord, 'tis much unkind to me,
'To shew this passion, this extreme concernment,
For an abandon'd faithless prostitute.

Ant. Octavia, leave me! I am much disorder'd!
Leave me, I say!

Oct. My lord!

Ant. I bid you leave me.

Vent. Obey him, Madam; best withdraw a while,
'And see how this will work.

Oct. Wherein have I offended you, my lord,
'That I am bid to leave you? Am I false,
'Or infamous? Am I a Cleopatra?
'Were I she,
'Base as she is, you would not bid me leave you;
'But hang upon my neck, take slight excuses,
'And fawn upon my falsehood.

Ant. 'Tis too much;
'Too much, Octavia! I am prest with sorrows:
'Too heavy to be borne, and you add more!
'I would retire, and recollect what's left
'Of man within, to aid me.

' *Oct.* You would mourn
 ' In private for your love, who has betray'd you.
 ' You did but half return to me, your kindness
 ' Linger'd behind with her. I hear, my lord,
 ' You make conditions for her,
 ' And would include her treaty. Wond'rous proofs
 ' Of love to me !

' *Ant.* Are you my friend, Ventidius ?
 ' Or are you turn'd a Dolabella too,
 ' And let this fury loose ?

' *Vent.* Oh, be advis'd,
 ' Sweet Madam, and retire. ✓

Oct. Yes, I will go ; but never to return. ✓
 ' You shall no more be haunted with this fury. ✓

My lord, my lord, love will not always last,
 When urg'd with long unkindness and disdain.
 Take her again whom you prefer to me ;
 She stays but to be call'd. Poor cozen'd man !
 Let a feign'd parting give her back your heart,
 Which a feign'd love first got ; for injur'd me,
 Tho' my just sense of wrongs forbid my stay,
 My duty shall be yours.

To the dear pledges of our former love,
 My tenderness and care shall be transfer'd,
 And they shall cheer by turns my widow'd nights !
 So take my last farewell ! for I despair

To have you whole, and scorn to take you half. [*Exit.*

Vent. I combat heav'n, which blasts my best designs !
 My last attempt must be to win her back ;
 But, Oh, I fear, in vain. [*Exit.*

Ant. Why was I fram'd with this plain honest heart,
 Which knows not to disguise its griefs and weakness,
 But bears its workings outward to the world ?
 I should have kept the mighty anguish in,
 And forc'd a smile at Cleopatra's falshood :
 Octavia had believ'd it, and had staid.
 But I am made a shallow-forded stream,
 Seen to the bottom : all my clearness scorn'd,
 And all my faults expos'd—See where he comes.

Enter Dolabella.

Who has prophan'd the sacred name of friend,
 And worn it into vileness !

With

68 ALL FOR LOVE.

With how secure a brow, and specious form
He gilds the secret villain ! Sure that face
Was meant for honesty ; but heav'n mismatch'd it,
And furnish'd treason out with nature's pomp,
To make its work more easy.

Dol. O my friend !

Ant. Well, Dolabella, you perform'd my message ?

Dol. I did, unwillingly.

Ant. Unwillingly ?

Was it so hard for you to bear our parting ?
You should have wish'd it.

Dol. Why ?

Ant. Because you love me.

And she receiv'd my message, with as true,
With as unfeign'd a sorrow, as you brought it ?

Dol. She loves you ev'n to madness.

Ant. Oh, I know it.

You, Dolabella, do not better know
How much she loves me. And should I
Forfake this beauty, this all perfect creature ?

Dol. I could not, were she mine.

Ant. And yet you first

Persuaded me. How come you alter'd since ?

Dol. I said at first I was not fit to go :

I could not hear her sighs, and see her tears,
But pity must prevail : and so, perhaps,
It may again with you ; for I have promis'd
That she should take her last farewell : and, see,
She comes to claim my word.

Enter Cleopatra.

Ant. False Dolabella !

Dol. What's false, my lord ?

Ant. Why Dolabella's false,

And Cleopatra's false ; both false and faithless.
Draw near, you well-join'd wickedness, you serpents,
Whom I have in my kindly bosom warm'd,
Till I am stung to death.

Dol. My lord, have I
Deserv'd to be thus us'd ?

Cleo. Can heav'n prepare
A newer torment ? Can it find a curse
Beyond our separation ?

Ant.

Ant. Yes, if fate

Be just, much greater : ' Heav'n should be ingenious

' In punishing such crimes. The rolling stone,

' And gnawing vulture, were slight pains, invented

' When Jove was young, and no examples known

' Of mighty ills ; but you have ripen'd sin

' To such a monstrous growth, 'twill pose the gods

' To find an equal torture.' Two, two such !

Oh, there's no farther name, two such—to me,

To me, who lock'd my soul within your breasts,

Had no desires, no joys, no life but you ;

' When half the globe was mine, I gave it you

' In dowry with my heart : I had no use,

' No fruit of all, but you : ' a friend and mistress

Was what the world could give. Oh, Cleopatra !

Oh, Dolabella ! how could you betray

This tender heart, which with an infant fondness

Lay lull'd betwixt your bosoms, and there slept

Secure of injur'd faith ?

Dol. If she has wrong'd you,

Heav'n, hell, and you revenge it.

Ant. If she has wrong'd me !

' Thou would'st evade thy part of guilt ; but swear

' Thou lov'st not her.

Dol. Not so as I love you.

Ant. Not so ! Swear, swear, I say, thou dost not love

Dol. No more than friendship will allow. [her.

Ant. No more ?

' Friendship allows thee nothing : thou art perjur'd—

' And yet thou didst not swear thou lov'st her not ;

' But not so much, no more. Oh, trifling hypocrite !

' Who durst not own to her thou dost not love,

' Nor own to me thou dost !' Ventidius heard it ;

Octavia saw it.

Cleo. They are enemies.

Ant. Alexas is not so : He, he confess it ;

He, who, next hell, best knew it, he avow'd it.

Why do I seek a proof beyond yourself ? [To Dol.

You whom I sent to bear my last farewell,

Return'd to plead her stay.

Dol. What shall I answer ?

If to have lov'd be guilt, then I have sinn'd ;

But

But if to have repented of that love
 Can wash away my crime, I have repented.
 Yet, if I have offended past forgiveness,
 Let her not suffer : she is innocent.

Cleo. Ah, what will not a woman do who loves !

What means will she refuse, to keep that heart
 Where all her joys are plac'd ! 'Twas I encourag'd,
 'Twas I blew up the fire that scorch'd his soul,
 To make you jealous ; and by that regain you.
 But all in vain ; I could not counterfeit :
 In spite of all the darts, my love broke o'er,
 And drown'd my heart again ; fate took th' occasion ;
 And thus one minute's feigning has destroy'd
 My whole life's truth.'

Ant. Thin cobweb arts of falshood ;
 Seen, and broke through at first.

Dol. Forgive your mistress.

Cleo. Forgive your friend.

Ant. You have convinc'd yourselves.

You plead each other's cause : what witnesses have you,
 That you but meant to raise my jealousy ?

Cleo. Ourselves and heav'n.

Ant. Guilt witnesses for guilt. Hence, love and friend-

You have no longer place in human breasts, [ship !
 These two have driv'n you out : avoid my sight ;
 I wou'd not kill the man whom I have lov'd ;
 And cannot hurt the woman ; but avoid me,
 I do not know how long I can be tame ;
 For, if I stay one minute more to think
 How I am wrong'd, my justice and revenge
 Will cry so loud within me, that my pity
 Will not be heard for either.

Dol. Heaven has but

Our sorrow for our sins ; and then delights
 To pardon erring man : sweet mercy seems
 Its darling attribute, which limits justice ;
 As if there were degrees in infinite ;
 And infinite would rather want perfection,
 Than punish to extent.'

Ant. I can forgive

A foe ; but not a mistress, and a friend :
 Treason is there in its most horrid shape,

Where

Where trust is greatest : ' and the soul resign'd
 ' Is stabb'd by its own guards.' I'll hear no more ;
 Hence from my sight, for ever.

Cleo. How ? for ever !

I cannot go one moment from your sight,
 And must I go for ever ?

My joys, my only joys are center'd here :
 What place have I to go to ? My own kingdom ?
 That I have lost for you : or to the Romans ?
 They hate me for your sake.. Or must I wander
 The wide world o'er, a helpless, banish'd woman ?
 Banish'd for love of you ; banish'd from you ;
 Ay, there's the banishment ! Oh, hear me ; hear me,
 With strictest justice : for I beg no favour :
 And if I have offended you, then kill me,
 But do not banish me.

Ant. I must not hear you.

I have a fool within me takes your part ;
 But honour stops my ears.

' *Cleo.* For pity hear me !

' Would you cast off a slave who follow'd you,
 ' Who crouch'd beneath your spurn ?—He has no pity !
 ' See, if he gives one tear to my departure ;
 ' One look, one kind farewell : Oh, iron heart !
 ' Let all the gods look down, and judge betwixt us,
 ' If he did ever love !

' *Ant.* No more : Alexas !

' *Dol.* A perjur'd villain !

' *Ant.* [To Cleo.] Your Alexas ! yours !

' *Cleo.* Oh, 'twas his plot : his ruinous design
 ' T'engage you in my love by jealousy.
 ' Hear him ; confront him with me ; let him speak.

' *Ant.* I have ; I have.

' *Cleo.* And if he clear me not.—

' *Ant.* Your creature ! one who hangs upon your
 ' Watches your eye, to say or to unsay [smiles !
 ' Whate'er you please.' I am not to be mov'd.

Cleo. Then must we part ? Farewel, my cruel lord.
 Th' appearance is against me ; and I go,
 Unjustifi'd, for ever from your sight.
 How I have lov'd, you know ; how yet I love,
 My only comfort is, I knew myself :

I love

I love you more, ev'n now you are unkind,
Than when you lov'd me most ; so well, so truly,
I'll never strive against it ; but die pleas'd
To think you once were mine.

Ant. Good heav'n, they weep at parting.
Must I weep too? That calls 'em innocent.
I must not weep ; and yet I must, to think
That I must not forgive——

Live ; but live wretched, 'tis but just you should,
Who made me so : live from each other's sight :
Let me not hear you meet. Set all the earth,
And all the seas, betwixt your sunder'd loves :
View nothing common but the sun and skies :
Now, all take several ways ;

And each your own sad fate with mine deplore ;
That you were false, and I could trust no more.

[Exeunt severally.]

A C T V.

SCENE, *the Temple.*

Enter Cleopatra, Charmion, and Iras.

CHARMION.

' **B**E juster, heav'n ! such virtue punish'd thus
' Will make us think that chance rules all above,
' And shuffles, with a random hand, the lots
' Which man is forc'd to draw.'

Cleo. I could tear out these eyes that gain'd his heart,
And had not pow'r to keep it. Oh, the curse
Of doting on, ev'n when I find it dotage !
Bear witness, Gods, you heard him bid me go ;
You, whom he mock'd with imprecating vows
Of promis'd faith——I'll die, I will not bear it.

' You may hold me——

[She pulls out her dagger, and they hold her.]

' But I can keep my breath : I can die inward,
' And choak this love.'

Enter Alexas.

' *Iras.* Help, Oh, Alexas, help !

' The queen grows desperate, her soul struggles in her,
With

‘ With all the agonies of love and rage,

‘ And strives to force its passage.

‘ *Cleo.* Let me go.’

Art thou there, traitor! — Oh,

Oh, for a little breath, to vent my rage!

‘ Give, give me way, and let me loose upon him.’

Alex. Yes, I deserve it, for my ill-tim’d truth.

‘ Was it for me to prop

‘ The ruins of a falling majesty?

‘ To place myself beneath the mighty *flaw*,

‘ Thus to be crush’d, and pounded into atoms,

‘ By its o’erwhelming weight? ’Tis too presuming

‘ For subjects, to preserve that wilful pow’r

‘ Which courts its own destruction.’

Cleo. I would reason

More calmly with you. Did you not o’er-rule,

And force my plain, direct, and open love,

Into these crooked paths of jealousy?

Now, what’s th’ event? Octavia is remov’d;

But Cleopatra banish’d. ‘ Thou, thou, villain,

‘ Hast push’d my boat to open sea; to prove,

‘ At my sad cost, if thou canst steer it back.

‘ It cannot be; I’m lost too far; I’m ruin’d:

‘ Hence, thou impostor, traitor, monster, devil —

‘ I can no more: thou, and my griefs, have sunk

‘ Me down so low, that I want voice to curse thee.

‘ *Alex.* Suppose some shipwreck’d seaman near the shore,

‘ Dropping and faint, with climbing up the cliff,

‘ If, from above, some charitable hand

‘ Pull him to safety, hazarding himself

‘ To draw the other’s weight; would he look back

‘ And curse him for his pains? The case is yours;

‘ But one step more, and you have gain’d the height.

‘ *Cleo.* Sunk, never more to rise.

Alex. ‘ Octavia’s gone, and Dolabella banish’d.’

Believe me, Madam, Antony is yours.

His heart was never lost; but started off

To jealousy, love’s last retreat and covert;

Where it lies hid in shades, watchful in silence,

And list’ning for the sound that calls it back.

Some other, any man, ’tis so advanc’d,

May perfect this unfinish'd work, 'which I
(Unhappy only to myself) have left
So easy to his hand.

Cleo. Look 'well thou do't ; else——

Alex. Else, what your silence threatens—Antony
Is mounted up the Pharos ; from whose turret,
He stands surveying our Ægyptian gallies,
Engag'd with Cæsar's fleet : now death, or conquest ;
If the first happen, fate acquits my promise,
If we o'ercome, the conqueror is yours.

[*A distant shout within.*

Char. Have comfort, Madam : Did you mark that
shout ?

[*Second shout nearer.*

Iras. Hark ; they redouble it.

Alex. 'Tis from the port.

The loudness shows it near. Good news, kind Heav'ns.

' *Cleo.* Osiris make it so.'

Enter Serapion.

Ser. Where, where's the queen ?

' *Alex.* How frightfully the holy coward stares !

' As if not yet recover'd of th' assault,
' When all his gods, and what's more dear to him,
' His off'rings, were at stake.'

Ser. Oh, horror, horror !

Ægypt has been ; the latest hour is come.
The queen of nations from her ancient seat
Is sunk for ever in the dark abyss :
Time has unroll'd her glories to the last,
And now clos'd up the volume.

Cleo. Be more plain :

Say, whence thou cam'st, (though fate is in thy face ;
Which from thy haggard eyes looks wildly out,
And threatens ere thou speak'st.)

Ser. I came from Pharos ;

From viewing (spare me, and imagine it)
Our land's last hope, your navy——

Cleo. Vanquish'd ?

Ser. No.

They fought not.

Cleo. Then they fled.

Ser. Nor that. I saw,
With Antony, your well-appointed fleet

Row out; and thrice he wav'd his hand on high,
 And thrice with chearful cries they shouted back :
 ' 'Twas then, false fortune, like a fawning strumpet,
 ' About to leave the bankrupt prodigal,
 ' With a dissembled smile would kiss at parting,
 ' And flatter to the last ;' the well-tim'd oars
 Now dipt from every bark, now smoothly run
 To meet the foe ; and soon, indeed, they met,
 But not as foes. In few we saw their caps
 On either side thrown up : the Ægyptian gallies,
 Receiv'd like friends, past through, and fell behind
 The Roman rear ; and now, they all come forward,
 And ride within the port.

Cleo. Enough, Serapion :

I've heard my doom. This needed not, you gods :
 When I lost Antony, your work was done.
 ' 'Tis but superfluous malice.' Where's my lord ?
 How bears he this last blow ?

Ser. His fury cannot be express'd by words :
 Thrice he attempted headlong to have fall'n
 Full on his foes, and aim'd at Cæsar's galley :
 Witheld, he raves on you, cries, he's betray'd.
 Should he now find you——

Alex. Shun him, seek your safety,
 Till you can clear your innocence.

Cleo. I'll stay.

Alex. You must not ; haste you to the monument,
 While I make speed to Cæsar.

Cleo. Cæsar ! No,
 I have no business with him.

Alex. I can work him,
 To spare your life, and let this madman perish.

Cleo. Base, fawning wretch ! wouldst thou betray him
 Hence from my sight, I will not hear a traitor ; [too ?
 'Twas thy design brought all this ruin on us.
 Serapion, thou art honest ; counsel me :
 But haste, each moment's precious.

Ser. Retire ; you must not yet see Antony.
 He who began this mischief,
 'Tis just he tempt the danger : let him clear you ;
 And, since he offer'd you his servile tongue,
 To gain a poor precarious life from Cæsar,

Let him expose that fawning eloquence,
And speak to Antony.

Alex. Oh, Heav'ns! I dare not :
I meet my certain death.

Cleo. Slave, thou deserv'st it,
Not that I fear my lord will I avoid him ;
I know him noble : When he banish'd me,
And thought me false, he scorn'd to take my life :
But I'll be justify'd, and then die with him.

Alex. Oh, pity me, and let me follow you.

Cleo. To death, if thou stir hence. Speak, if thou
can'st,

Now for thy life, which basely thou wouldst save,
While mine I prize at this. Come, good Serapion.

[*Exeunt* Cleo. Ser. Char. and Iras.]

Alex. Oh, that I less cou'd fear to lose this being,
Which, like a snow ball, in my coward hand,
The more 'tis grasp'd, the faster melts away.
Poor reason! What a wretched aid art thou!
For still, in spite of thee,
These two long lovers, soul and body, dread
Their final separation. Let me think :
What can I say, to save myself from death?
No matter what becomes of Cleopatra.

Ant. Which way? Where?

[*Within.*

Vent. This leads to th' monument.

[*Within.*

Alex. Ah me! I hear him : yet I'm unprepar'd ;
My gift of lying's gone ;
And this court-devil, which I so oft have rais'd,
Forfakes me at my need. I dare not stay ;
Yet cannot go far hence.

[*Exit.*

Enter Antony and Ventidius.

Ant. Oh, happy Cæsar! Thou hast men to lead.
Think not 'tis thou hast conquer'd Antony :
But Rome has conquer'd Ægypt. I'm betray'd.

' *Vent.* Curse on this treach'rous train !

• Their soil and Heaven infect 'em all with baseness :
• And their young souls come tainted to the world
• With the first breath they draw.

' *Ant.* Th' original villain sure no god created ;
• He was a bastard of the sun, by Nile ;

' Ap'd

‘ Ap’d into man, with all his mother’s mud
 ‘ Crufted about his foul.’

Vent. The nation is
 One univerfal traitor ; and their queen.
 The very fpirit and extract of ’em all.

Ant. Is there yet left
 A poffibility of aid and valour ?
 Is there one god unsworn to my deftruction ?
 ‘ The leaft unmortgag’d hope ?’ For, if there be,
 Methinks I cannot fall beneath the fate
 Of fuch a boy as Cæfar.
 ‘ The world’s one half is yet in Antony ;
 ‘ And from each limb of it that’s hew’d away,
 ‘ The foul comes back to me.’

Vent. There yet remain
 Three legions in the town. The laft affault
 Lopt off the reft. If death be your defign,
 As I muft wifh it now, thefe are fufficient
 To make a heap about us of dead foes ;
 An honeft pile for burial.

Ant. They’re enough.
 We’ll not divide our ftars ; but fide by fide
 Fight emulous, and with malicious eyes
 Survey each other’s acts : ‘ So every death.
 ‘ Thou giv’ft, I’ll take on me, as a juft debt,
 ‘ And pay thee back a foul.’

Vent. Now you fhall fee I love you. ‘ Not a word
 ‘ Of chiding more.’ By my few hours of life,
 I am fo pleas’d with this brave Roman fate,
 That I would not be Cæfar, to outlive you.
 When we put off this flefh, and mount together,
 I fhall be fhown to all th’ etherial crowd ;
 Lo, this is he who dy’d with Antony.

Ant. Who knows but we may pierce through all their
 troops,
 And reach my veterans yet ? ’Tis worth the tempting,
 ‘ T’ o’erleap this gulf of fate,
 ‘ And leave your wand’ring deftinies behind.’

Enter Alexas, trembling.

Vent. See, fee, that villain !
 See ‘ Cleopatra ftampt upon that face,
 ‘ With all her cunning, all her arts of falshood !

‘ How she looks out through those dissembling eyes !’

How he has set his count’nance for deceit ;

And promises a lie, before he speaks !

Let me dispatch him first.

[Drawing.

‘ *Alex.* Oh, spare me, spare me.’

Ant. Hold ; he’s not worth your killing. On thy life,
(Which thou may’st keep, because I scorn to take it)

No syllable to justify thy queen ;

Save thy base tongue its office.

Alex. Sir, she’s gone,

Where she shall never be molested more

By love or you.

Ant. Fled to her Dolabella !

Die, traitor, I revoke my promise, die. [Going to kill him.

Alex. Oh, hold, she is not fled.

Ant. She is. My eyes

Are open to her falshood. My whole life

Has been a golden dream of love and friendship :

But, now I wake, I’m like a merchant, rous’d

From soft repose, to see his vessel sinking,

And all his wealth cast o’er. Ingrateful woman !

Who follow’d me, but as the swallow summer ;

‘ Hatching her young ones in my kindly beams,

‘ Singing her flatt’ries to my morning wake ;’

But, now my winter comes, she spreads her wings,

And seeks the spring of Cæsar.

Alex. Think not so :

Her fortunes have, in all things, mixt with yours.

Had she betray’d her naval force to Rome,

How easily might she have gone to Cæsar,

Secure by such a bribe !

Vent. She sent it first,

To be more welcome after.

Ant. ’Tis too plain ;

Else would she have appear’d, to clear herself.

Alex. ‘ Too fatally she has ;’ she could not bear

To be accus’d by you ; but shut herself

Within her monument : look’d down and sigh’d ;

While, from her unchang’d face, the silent tears

Dropt, as they had not leave, but stole their parting.

Some undistinguish’d words she inly murmur’d ;

At last, she rais'd her eyes, and with such looks
As dying Lucrece cast——

Ant. My heart forebodes——

Vent. 'All for the best.' Go on.

Alex. She snatch'd her poniard,
And, ere we could prevent the fatal blow,
Plung'd it within her breast : then turn'd to me ;
Go, bear my lord, said she, my last farewell,
And ask him, if he yet suspect my faith.
More she was saying, but death rush'd betwixt.
She half pronounc'd your name with her last breath,
And bury'd half within her.

Vent. Heav'n be prais'd.

Ant. Then art thou innocent, my poor dear love ?
And art thou dead ?

Oh, those two words ! their sound should be divided :
Hadst thou been false, and dy'd ; or hadst thou liv'd,
And hadst been true—But innocence and death !
This shows not well above. Then what am I ?
The murderer of this truth, this innocence !
Thoughts cannot form themselves in words so horrid
As can express my guilt !

Vent. Is't come to this ? The gods have been too gra-
And thus you thank 'em for't. [cious ;

Ant. [To *Alex.*] Why stay'st thou here ?

' Is it for thee to spy upon my soul,
' And see its inward mourning ? Get thee hence :
Thou art not worthy to behold what now
Becomes a Roman emperor to perform.

' *Alex.* He loves her still : [Aside.
' His grief betrays it. Good ! the joy to find
' She's yet alive, compleats the reconciliation ;
' I've sav'd myself, and her. But, Oh, the Romans !
' Fate comes too fast upon my wit,
' Hunts me too hard, and meets me at each double.'

[Exit.

Vent. Wou'd she had dy'd a little sooner tho',
Before Octavia went ; you might have treated ;
Now 'twill look tame, and wou'd not be receiv'd.
Come, rouse yourself, and let's die warm together.

' *Ant.* I will not fight : there's no more work for war.
' The business of my angry hours is done.

' *Vent.*

Vent. Cæsar is at your gate.

Ant. Why, let him enter:

He's welcome now.

Vent. What lethargy has crept into your soul?

Ant. 'Tis but a scorn of life, and just desire,

To free myself from bondage.

Vent. Do it bravely.

Ant. I will; but not by fighting.' Oh, Ventidius!

What should I fight for now? My queen is dead.

I was but great for her; my pow'r, my empire,

Were but my merchandise to buy her love;

And conquer'd kings, my factors. Now she's dead,

Let Cæsar take the world——

An empty circle, since the jewel's gone

Which made it worth my strife: my being's nauseous;

For all the bribes of life are gone away.'

Vent. Wou'd you be taken?

Ant. Yes, I wou'd be taken:

But, as a Roman ought, dead, my Ventidius;

For I'll convey my soul from Cæsar's reach,

And lay down life myself. 'Tis time the world

Shou'd have a lord, and know whom to obey.

We too have kept its homage in suspense,

And bent the globe on whose each side we trod,

Till it was dinted inwards. Let him walk

Alone upon't; I'm weary of my part.

My torch is out; and the world stands before me

Like a black desert at th' approach of night:

I'll lay me down, and stray no farther on.

Vent. 'I could be griev'd;

But that I'll not out-live you.' Chuse your death;

For, I have seen him in such various shapes,

I care not which I take: I'm only troubled,

The life I bear is worn to such a rag,

'Tis scarce worth giving. I could wish, indeed,

We threw it from us with a better grace;

That, like two lions taken in the toils,

We might, at least, thrust out our paws and wound

The hunters that inclose us.

Ant. I have thought on't;

Ventidius, you must live.

Vent. I must not, Sir.

Ant.

Ant. Wilt thou not live, to speak some good of me ?
 ' To stand by my fair fame, and guard th' approaches
 ' From the ill tongues of men ?

Vent. Who shall guard mine
 ' For living after you ?

Ant. Say, I command it.

Vent. If we die well, our deaths will speak themselves,
 ' And need no living witness.'

Ant. Thou hast lov'd me,
 And fain I would reward thee. I must die;
 Kill me, and take the merit of my death
 ' To make thee friends with Cæsar.

Vent. Thank your kindness.
 You said I lov'd you : and, in recompence,
 You bid me turn a traitor ! Did I think
 You would have us'd me thus ! that I should die
 With a hard thought of you !

Ant. Forgive me, Roman.
 Since I have heard of Cleopatra's death
 My reason bears no rule upon my tongue,
 But lets my thoughts break all at random out.
 I've thought better ; do not deny me twice.

Vent. By heav'n I will not,
 Let it not be t'out live you.

Ant. Kill me first,
 And then die thou ; for 'tis but just thou serve
 Thy friend, before thyself.

Vent. Give me your hand—
 We soon shall meet again. Now, farewell, emperor.

[*Embrace.*]

Methinks that word's too cold to be my last :
 Since death sweeps all distinctions, farewell, friend.
 That's all——

I will not make a business of a trifle—
 And yet I cannot look on you and kill you.
 Pray turn your face.

Ant. I do : Strike home be sure.

Vent. Home, as my sword will reach. [*Kills himself.*]

Ant. Oh, thou mistak'st !
 That wound was none of thine : give it me back.
 Thou robb'dst me of my death.

Vent. I do indeed ;

But

But, think, 'tis the first time I e'er deceiv'd you ;
 If that may plead my pardon. And you, gods,
 Forgive me, if you will ; for I die perjur'd,
 Rather than kill my friend.

[Dies.

Ant. Farewel ! Ever my leader, ev'n in death !

My queen and thou have got the start of me ;
 And I'm the lag of honour.—Gone so soon !
 Is death no more ! ' He us'd him carelessly,
 ' With a familiar kindness : ere he knock'd,
 ' Ran to the door, and took him in his arms,
 ' As who should say, you're welcome at all hours,
 ' A friend need give no warning—Books had spoil'd him,
 ' For all the learn'd are cowards by profession.'
 'Tis not worth

My further thought ; for death, for ought I know,
 Is but to think no more. Here's to be satisfy'd.

[Falls on his sword.

I've miss'd my heart—Oh, unperforming hand !

Thou never couldst have err'd in a worse time.

' My fortune jades me to the last ; and death,
 ' Like a great man, takes state and makes me wait
 ' For my admittance'—

[Trampling within.

Some perhaps from Cæsar !

' If he should find me living, and suspect

' That I play'd booty with my life !' I'll mend

My work, ere they can reach me. [Rises upon his knees,

Enter Cleopatra, Charmion, and Iras.

Cleo. Where is my lord ? Where is he ?

' *Char.* There he lies,

' And dead Ventidius by him.'

Cleo. My fears were prophets ! I am come too late !

Oh, that accurs'd Alexas !

[Runs to him.

Ant. Art thou living ?

Or am I dead before I knew, and thou

The first kind ghost that meets me ?

' *Cleo.* Help me seat him !

' Send quickly, send for help ! [They place him in a chair.

' *Ant.* I am answer'd.

' We live both. Sit thee down, my Cleopatra ;

' I'll make the most I can of life, to stay

' A moment more with thee.'

Cleo. How is it with you ?

Ant.

Ant. 'Tis as with a man
Removing in a hurry ; all pack'd up,
But one dear jewel that his haste forgot ;
And he, for that returns upon the spur :
So I come back for thee.

Cleo. Too long, ye heav'ns, you have been cruel to me !
Oh, now be kind, and give me back
His fleeting life.

Ant. It will not be, my love !
I keep my soul by force.
Say but thou art not false.

Cleo. 'Tis now too late
To say I'm true : I'll prove it, and die with you.
Unknown to me, Alexas feign'd my death,
Which, when I knew, I hasten'd to prevent
This fatal consequence. My fleet betray'd
Both you and me.

Ant. And Dolabella——
Cleo. Scarce esteem'd before he lov'd : but hated now.

Ant. Enough ! my life's not long enough for more.
Thou say'st thou wilt come after ; I believe thee ;
For I can now believe whate'er thou say'st,
That we may part more kindly.

Cleo. I will come :
Doubt not, my life, I'll come, and quickly too !
Cæsar shall triumph o'er no part of thee.

Ant. But grieve not, while thou stay'st,
My last disastrous times !
Think we have had a clear and glorious day ;
And heav'n did kindly to delay the storm
Just till our close of ev'ning. Ten years love,
And not a moment lost, but all improv'd
To th' utmost joys ! What ages have we liv'd !
And now to die each others ! and, so dying,
While hand in hand we walk in groves below,
Whole troops of lover's ghosts shall flock about us,
And all the train be ours.

Cleo. Your words are like the notes of dying swans,
Too sweet to last. Were there so many hours
For your unkindness, and not one for love !

Ant. No, not a minute—This one kiss—more worth
Than all I leave to Cæsar.—

[Dies.
Cleo.

Cleo. Oh, tell me so again !

‘ And take ten thousand kisses for that word’——
My lord ! my lord ! Speak, if you yet have being ?
Sigh to me if you cannot speak ! or cast
One look ; do any thing that shows you live.

Iras. He’s gone too far to hear you,

‘ And this you see, a lump of senseless clay,
‘ The leavings of a soul.’

Char. Remember, Madam,
He charg’d you not to grieve.

Cleo. And I’ll obey him.

I have not lov’d a Roman, not to know
What should become his wife—his wife, my Charmion !
For ’tis to that high title I aspire ;

And now I’ll not die less. ‘ Let dull Octavia,
‘ Survive to mourn him dead : my noble fate
‘ Shall knit our spousals with a tie too strong
‘ For Roman laws to break.’

Iras. Will you then die ?

Cleo. Why shouldst thou make that question ?
Fly both and bring the cure of all our ills.

‘ *Iras.* Cæsar is merciful.——

‘ *Cleo.* Let him be so

‘ To those that want his mercy : my poor lord
‘ Made no such cov’nant with him, to spare me
‘ When he was dead. Yield me to Cæsar’s pride !
‘ What, to be led in triumph thro’ the streets,
‘ A spectacle to base plebean eyes ;
‘ While some dejected friend of Antony’s,
‘ Close in a corner, shakes his head, and mutters
‘ A secret curse on her who ruin’d him——
‘ I’ll none of that——

‘ *Char.* Whatever you resolve

‘ I’ll follow ev’n to death.

‘ *Iras.* I only fear’d

‘ For you ; but more should fear to live without you.

‘ *Cleo.* Why now ’tis as it should be. Quick, my friends,
‘ Dispatch ; ere this, the town’s in Cæsar’s hands :
‘ My lord looks down concern’d and fears my stay,
‘ Left I should be surpriz’d ;
‘ Keep him not waiting for his love too long.
‘ You, Charmion, bring my crown and richest jewels,

‘ With

- With 'em the wreath of victory I made
- (Vain augury !) for him who now lies dead ;
- You, Iras, bring the cure of all our ills.'

Iras. The aspicks, Madam ?

Cleo. Must I bid you twice ? [*Ex. Char. and Iras.*

'Tis sweet to die, when they would force life on me,
To rush into the dark abode of death,

And meet my love.

- And seize him first ! if he be like my love,
- He is not frightful sure !
- We're now alone, in secrecy and silence ;
- And is not this like lovers ? I may kiss
- These pale, cold lips—Octavia does not see me ;
- And, Oh, 'tis better far to have him thus,
- Than see him in her arms !——Oh welcome, welcome.)

Enter Charmion and Iras, with the aspicks, &c.

• *Char.* What must be done ?

• *Cleo.* Short ceremony, friends ;

- But yet it must be decent. First, this laurel
- Shall crown my hero's head : he fell not basely,
- Nor left his shield behind him. Only thou
- Couldst triumph o'er thyself ; and thou alone
- Wert worthy so to triumph.

• *Char.* To what end

• These ensigns of your pomp and royalty ?

• *Cleo.* Dull, that thou art ! why, 'tis to meet my love ;

- As when I saw him first on Cydno's bank,
- All sparkling like a goddess ; so adorn'd,
- I'll find him once again : my second spouse.
- Shall match my first, in glory. Haste, haste, both,
- And dress the bride of Antony !

• *Char.* 'Tis done.

• *Cleo.* Now set me by my lord. I claim this place ;

- For I must conquer Cæsar too, like him,
- And win my share o' th' world. Hail, you dear relics
- Of my immortal love !
- Oh, let no impious hand remove you hence ;
- But rest for ever here : let Egypt give
- His death that peace, which it deny'd his life.
- Reach me the casket.

• *Iras.* Underneath the fruit the aspicks lies.'

Cleo. Welcome, thou kind deceiver !

[*Putting aside the leaves.*]

Thou best of thieves ; who, with an easy key,
Dost open life, and, unperceiv'd by us,
Ev'n steals us from ourselves : ' discharging so
' Death's dreadful office, better than himself,
' Touching our limbs so gently into slumber,
' That death stands by, deceiv'd by his own image,
' And thinks himself but sleep.'

Ser. The queen, where is she ?

[*Within.*]

The town is yielded, Cæsar's at the gates.

Cleo. He comes too late t' invade the rights of death.

Haste, haste, my friend, and rouse the serpent's fury.

[*Holds out her arm, and draws it back.*]

Coward flesh——

Would'st thou conspire with Cæsar, to betray me,
As thou wert none of mine ? I'll force thee to't,
And not be sent by him,
But bring myself, my soul to Antony.

[*Turns aside, and then shows her arm bloody.*]

Take hence : the work is done.

Ser. Break ope the door,

[*Within.*]

And guard the traitor well.

' *Char.* The next is ours.

' *Iras.* Now Charmion, to be worthy

' Of our great queen and mistress.' [*They apply the aspicks.*]

Cleo. Already, death, I feel thee in my veins ;

I go with such a will to find my lord,

That we shall quickly meet.

A heavy numbness creeps thro' every limb,

And now 'tis at my head : my eye-lids fall,

And my dear love is vanished in a mist !

' Where shall I find him, where ? Oh, turn me to him !

' And lay me on his breast'——Cæsar, thy worst ;

Now part us, if thou canst.

[*Dies.*]

[*Iras sinks down at her feet and dies; Charmion stands behind her chair, as dressing her head.*]

Enter Serapion, two Priests, Alexas bound, and Egyptians.

2 Priest. Behold, Serapion, what havock death has

Ser. 'Twas what I fear'd.

[*made!*]

' Charmion, is this well done ?

Char.

' *Char.* Yes, 'tis well done, and like a queen, the last
' Of her great race : I follow her. [*Sinks down ; dies.*

' *Alex.* 'Tis true,
' She has done well : much better thus to die,
' Than live to make a holy-day in Rome.'

Ser. See how the lovers lye in state together,
As they were giving laws to half mankind.
Th' impression of a smile left in her face,
Shows she dy'd pleas'd with him for whom she liv'd,
And went to charm him in another world.
Cæsar's just entring ; grief has now no leisure.
Secure that villain, as our pledge of safety,
To grace th' imperial triumph. Sleep, blest pair,
Secure from human chance, long ages out,
While all the storms of fate fly o'er your tomb ;
And fame to late posterity shall tell,
No lovers liv'd so great, or dy'd so well. [*Exeunt.*

END of the FIFTH ACT.



E P I L O G U E.

POETS, like disputants, when reasons fail,
 Have one sure refuge left; and that's to rail.
 Fop, coxcomb, fool, are thunder'd thro' the pit:
 And this is all their equipage of wit.
 We wonder how the devil this diff'rence grows,
 Betwixt our fools in verse, and yours in prose:
 For, 'faith, the quarrel rightly understood,
 'Tis civil war with their own flesh and blood.
 The thread-bare author hates the gawdy coat;
 And swears at the gilt coach, but swears a foot:
 For 'tis observ'd of every scribbling man,
 He grows a fop as fast as e'er he can;
 Prunes up, and asks the oracle his glass,
 If pink or purple best becomes his face.
 For our poor wretch, he neither rails nor prays;
 Nor likes your wit, just as you like his plays,
 He has not yet so much of Mr. Bays.
 He does his best, and if he cannot please,
 Would quietly sue out his writ of ease.
 Yet, if he might his own grand jury call;
 By the fair sex he begs to stand or fall.
 Let Cæsar's pow'r the men's ambition move;
 But grace you him who lost the world for love.
 Yet if some antiquated lady say,
 The last age is not copy'd in his play;
 Heav'n help the man who for that face must drudge,
 Which only has the wrinkles of a judge.
 Let not the young and beauteous join with those;
 For should you raise such numerous hosts of foes,
 Young wits and sparks he to his aid must call,
 'Tis more than one man's work to please you all.







Engraved from a Picture in the Possession of D. Garrick Esq.

Thornthwaite Sc.

Published for Balls British Theatre Sept: 2^d 1776.

M^{rs} CIBBER in the Character of **MONTMIA**.

*Read'st thou not something in my Face, that speaks
wonderful Change and Horror from within me?*

THE
UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C.
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C.
1914



BELL'S EDITION.

THE
ORPHAN;
OR THE
UNHAPPY MARRIAGE.

A TRAGEDY,
As written by Mr. THOMAS OTWAY.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,
By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,
By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

*Qui pelago credit magno, se faenore tollit;
Qui pugnas & castra petit, præcingitur auro;
Vilis adulator picto jacet ebrius ostro,
Et qui sollicitat nuptas, ad præmia peccat;
Sola pruinosis borret facundia pannis,
Atque inopi lingua desertas invocat artes.*

PET. ARR.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCLXXVI.



TO HER.

ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

D U C H E S S.

MADAM,

AFTER having a great while wish'd to write something that might be worthy to lay at your highness's feet, and finding it impossible : since the world has been so kind to me to judge of this poem to my advantage, as the most pardonable fault, which I had made in its kind, I had finned against myself if I had not chosen this opportunity to implore (what my ambition is most fond of) your favour and protection.

For though fortune would not so far bless my endeavours, as to encourage them with your Royal Highness's presence, when this came into the world ; yet I cannot but declare, it was my design and hopes, it might have been your divertisement in that happy season, when you return'd again, to chear all those eyes that had before wept for your departure, and enliven all hearts that had drooped for your absence. When wit ought to have paid its choicest tributes in, and joy have known no limits, then I hoped my little mite would not have been rejected, though my ill fortune was too hard for me, and I lost a greater honour, by your Royal Highness's absence, than all the applauses of the world besides can make me reparation for.

Nevertheless, I thought myself not quite unhappy, so long as I had hopes this way yet to recompense my disap-

pointment past: when I consider'd also, that poetry might claim right to a little share in your favour; for Tasso, and Ariosto, some of the best, have made their names eternal, by transmitting to after ages the glory of your ancestors: and under the spreading of that shade, where two of the best have planted their laurels, how honoured should I be, who am the worst, if but a branch might grow for me?

I dare not think of offering any thing in this address, that might look like a panegyrick, for fear, lest when I have done my best, the world should condemn me for saying too little, and you yourself check me for meddling with a task unfit for my talent.

For the description of virtues and perfections so rare as yours are, ought to be done by as deliberate, as skilful a hand; the features must be drawn very fine, to be like; hasty daubing will but spoil the picture, and make it so unnatural, as must want false lights to set it off. And your virtue can receive no more lustre from practices, than your beauty can be improv'd by art; which, as it charms the bravest prince that ever amaz'd the world with his virtue: so, let but all other hearts enquire into themselves, and then judge how it ought to be praised.

Your love, too, as none but that great hero who has it, could deserve it, and therefore, by a particular lot from Heaven, was destin'd to so extraordinary a blessing, so matchless for itself, and so wondrous for its constancy, shall be remembered to your immortal honour, when all other transactions of the age you live in shall be forgotten.

But I forget that I am to ask pardon for the fault I have been all this while committing. Wherefore I beg your Highness to forgive me this presumption, and that you will be pleas'd to think well of one who cannot help resolving with all the actions of life, to endeavour to deserve it: nay more, I would beg, and hope it may be granted, that I may, through yours, never want an advocate in his favour, whose heart and mind you have so entire a share in; it is my only portion and my fortune. I cannot but be happy, so long as I have but hopes I may enjoy it; and I must be miserable, should it ever be my ill fate to lose it.

This,

[5]

This, with eternal wishes for your Royal Highness's content, happiness, and prosperity, in all humility is presented by

Your most obedient, and
devoted servant,

THO. OTWAY.



P R O L O G U E.

TO you, great judges in this writing age,
 The sons of wit, and patrons of the stage,
 With all those humble thoughts, which still have sway'd
 His pride, much doubting, trembling and afraid
 Of what is to his want of merit due,
 And aw'd by ev'ry excellence in you,
 The author sends to beg you will be kind,
 And spare those many faults you needs must find.
 You, to whom wit a common foe is grown,
 The thing ye scorn and publicly disown.
 Though now, perhaps, ye're here for other ends,
 He swears to me ye ought to be his friends:
 For he ne'er call'd ye yet inspid tools;
 Nor wrote one line to tell ye you were fools:
 But says of wit ye have so large a store,
 So very much you never will have more.
 He ne'er with libel treated yet the town,
 The names of honest men bedaub'd and shewn.
 Nay, never once lampoon'd the harmless life,
 Of suburb virgin, or of city wife.
 Satyr's th' effect of poetry's disease,
 Which, sick of a lewd age, she vents for ease,
 But now her only strife should be to please;
 Since of ill fate the baneful cloud's withdrawn,
 And happiness again begins to dawn;
 Since back with joy and triumph he is come,
 That always drew fears hence, ne'er brought 'em home.
 Oft has he plough'd the boisterous ocean o'er,
 Yet ne'er more welcome to the longing shore,
 Not when he brought home victories before.
 For then fresh laurels flourish'd on his brow;
 And he comes crown'd with olive-branches now:
 Receive him—Oh, receive him as his friends;
 Embrace the blessings which he recommends:
 Such quiet as your foes shall ne'er destroy;
 Then shake off fears, and clap your hands for joy.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Drury-Lane. Covent-Garden.

<i>Acasto</i> , a nobleman re- tired from the court, and living privately in the country,	Mr. Packer.	Mr. Hull.
<i>Castalio</i> , } his sons,	Mr. Reddish.	Mr. Smith.
<i>Polydore</i> , }	Mr. Brereton.	Mr. Wroughton.
<i>Chamont</i> , a young sol- dier of fortune, brother of <i>Monimia</i> ,	Mr. Smith.	Mr. Bensley.
<i>Ernesto</i> , } servants in	Mr. Wrighten.	Mr. Redman.
<i>Paulino</i> , } the family,		
<i>Cordelio</i> , <i>Polydore's</i> page,	Master Pulley.	Miss Cockayne.
Chaplain.	Mr. Usher.	

W O M E N.

<i>Monimia</i> , the Orphan, left under the guar- dianship of old <i>Acas- to</i> ,	Miss Younge.	Miss Miller.
<i>Serina</i> , <i>Acasto's</i> daugh- ter,	Miss Platt.	Mrs. Pouffin.
<i>Florella</i> , <i>Monimia's</i> woman,	Mrs. Johnston.	Mrs. Pitt.

S C E N E, B O H E M I A.

T H E
O R P H A N.

A C T I.

‘ *Enter Paulino and Ernesto.*

‘ PAULINO.

‘ **T**IS strange, Ernesto, this severity
 ‘ Should still reign powerful in Acasto’s mind,
 ‘ To hate the court where he was bred, and liv’d,
 ‘ All honours heap’d on him that pow’r could give.

‘ *Ern.* ’Tis true, he thither came a private gentleman,
 ‘ But young and brave, and of a family
 ‘ Ancient and noble, as the empire holds.
 ‘ The honours he has gain’d are justly his ;
 ‘ He purchas’d them in war : thrice has he led
 ‘ An army ’gainst the rebels, and as often
 ‘ Return’d with victory. The world has not
 ‘ A truer soldier, or a better subject.

‘ *Paul.* It was his virtue at first made me serve him ;
 ‘ He is the best of masters and of friends :
 ‘ I know he has lately been invited thither ;
 ‘ Yet still he keeps his stubborn purpose ; cries
 ‘ He’s old, and willingly would be at rest.
 ‘ I doubt there’s deep resentment in his mind,
 ‘ For the late flight his honour suffer’d there.

‘ *Ern.* Has he not reason ? When for what he had
 ‘ borne,
 ‘ Long, hard, and painful toil, he might have claim’d
 ‘ Places in honour, and employment high ;
 ‘ A huffing, shining, flatt’ring, cringing coward,
 ‘ A canker-worm of peace, was rais’d above him.

‘ *Paul.* Yet still he holds just value for the king,
 ‘ Nor ever names him but with highest reverence.
 ‘ ’Tis noble that——

‘ *Ern.*

‘ *Ern.* Oh ! I have heard him wanton in his praise,

‘ Speak things of him might charm the ears of envy.

‘ *Paul.* Oh, may he live till nature’s self grows old,

‘ And from her womb no more can blefs the earth !

‘ For when he dies, farewell all honour, bounty,

‘ All generous encouragement of arts ;

‘ For charity herself becomes a widow.

‘ *Ern.* No, he has two sons, that were ordain’d to be

‘ As well his virtues as his fortune’s heirs.

‘ *Paul.* They’re both of nature mild, and full of

‘ sweetness ;

‘ They came twins from the womb, and still they live

‘ As if they would go twins too to the grave :

‘ Neither has any thing he calls his own,

‘ But of each other’s joys, as griefs, partaking ;

‘ So very honestly, so well they love,

‘ As they were only for each other born.

‘ *Ern.* Never was parent in an offspring happier ;

‘ He has a daughter too, whose blooming age

‘ Promises goodnefs equal to her beauty.

‘ *Paul.* And as there is a friendship ’twixt the brethren,

‘ So has her infant nature chosen too

‘ A faithful partner of her thoughts and wishes,

‘ And kind companion of her harmless pleasures.

‘ *Ern.* You mean the beauteous orphan, fair Monimia.

‘ *Paul.* The same, the daughter of the brave Chamont.

‘ He was our lord’s companion in the wars ;

‘ Where such a wond’rous friendship grew between ’em,

‘ As only death could end. Chamont’s estate

‘ Was ruin’d in our late and civil discords ;

‘ Therefore, unable to advance her fortune,

‘ He left his daughter to our master’s care ;

‘ To such a care, as she scarce lost her father.

‘ *Ern.* Her brother to the emperor’s wars went early,

‘ To seek a fortune, or a noble fate ;

‘ Whence he with honour is expected back,

‘ And mighty marks of that great prince’s favour.

‘ *Paul.* Our master never would permit his sons

‘ To launch for fortune in th’ uncertain world ;

‘ But warns ’em to avoid both courts and camps,

‘ Where d’latory fortune plays the jilt

‘ With the brave, noble, honest, gallant man,

‘ To throw herself away on fools and knaves.

‘ *Ern.*

- ‘ *Ern.* They both have forward, gen’rous, active spirits.
 * ’Tis daily their petition to their father,
 ‘ To send them forth where glory’s to be gotten :
 ‘ They cry, they’re weary of their lazy home,
 ‘ Restless to do something that fame may talk of.
 ‘ To-day they chas’d the boar, and near this time
 ‘ Should be return’d.
 ‘ *Paul.* Oh, that’s a royal sport !
 ‘ We yet may see the old man in a morning,
 ‘ Lusty as health, come ruddy to the field,
 ‘ And there pursue the chace, as if he meant
 ‘ To o’ertake time, and bring back youth again. [*Ex.*’]

SCENE, *a garden.*

Enter Castalio, Polydore, and Page.

Cast. Polydore, our sport
 Has been to-day much better for the danger ;
 When on the brink the foaming boar I met,
 And in his side thought to have lodg’d my spear,
 The desperate savage rush’d within my force,
 And bore me headlong with him down the rock.

Pol. But then——

Cast. Ay then, my brother, my friend Polydore,
 Like Perseus mounted on his winged steed,
 Came on, and down the dangerous precipice leap’d
 To save Castalio. ’Twas a godlike act !

Pol. But when I came, I found you conqueror,
 Oh, my heart danc’d to see your danger past !
 The heat and fury of the chace was cold,
 And I had nothing in my mind but joy.

Cast. So, Polydore, methinks we might in war
 Rush on together ; thou shouldst be my guard,
 And I be thine ; what is’t could hurt us then ?
 Now half the youth of Europe are in arms,
 How fulsome must it be to stay behind,
 And die of rank diseases here at home ?

Pol. No, let me purchase in my youth renown,
 To make me lov’d and valu’d when I am old ;
 I would be busy in the world, and learn,
 Not like a coarse and useless dunghill weed,
 Fix’d to one spot, and rot just as I grow.

Cast. Our father——

84 THE ORPHAN.

Pol. 'Tis kindly offer'd.

Cast. By yon Heaven, I love
My Polydore beyond all worldly joys ;
And would not shock his quiet, to be blest
With greater happiness than man e'er tasted.

Pol. And by that Heaven eternally I swear,
To keep the kind Castalio in my heart.
Whose shall Monimia be ?

Cast. No matter whose.

Pol. Were you not with her privately last night ?

Cast. I was, and should have met her here again ;
But th' opportunity shall now be thine ;
Myself will bring thee to the scene of love :
But have a care, by friendship I conjure thee,
That no false play be offer'd to thy brother.
Urge all thy pow'rs to make thy passion prosper :
But wrong not mine.

Pol. Heaven blast me if I do.

Cast. If't prove thy fortune, Polydore, to conquer,
(For thou hast all the arts of soft persuasion) -
Trust me, and let me know thy love's success,
That I may ever after stifle mine.

Pol. Though she be dearer to my soul than rest
To weary pilgrims, or to misers gold,
To great men pow'r, or wealthy cities pride,
Rather than wrong Castalio, I'd forget her.

For if ye pow'rs have happiness in store,
When ye would show'r down joys on Polydore,
In one great blessing all your bounty send,
That I may never lose so dear a friend.

[*Exeunt Cast. and Pol.*

Enter Monimia.

Mon. So soon return'd from hunting ? This fair day
Seems as if sent to invite the world abroad.
Pass'd not Castalio and Polydore this way ?

Page. Madam, just now.

Mon. Sure some ill fate's upon me.
Distrust and heaviness fit round my heart,
And apprehension shocks my timorous soul.
Why was not I laid in my peaceful grave
With my poor parents, and at rest as they are ?
Instead of that, I'm wandering into cares.
Castalio ! Oh, Castalio ! thou hast caught

My

My foolish heart; and like a tender child,
That trusts his play-thing to another hand,
I fear its harm, and fain would have it back.
Come near, Cordelio. I must chide you, Sir.

Page. Why, Madam, have I done you any wrong?

Mon. I never see you now; you have been kinder;
Sat by my bed, and sung me pretty songs;
Perhaps I've been ungrateful. Here's money for you:
Will you oblige me? Shall I see you oft'ner?

Page. Madam, I'd serve you with my soul:

- But in the morning when you call me to you,
- As by your bed I stand, and tell you stories,
- I am asham'd to see your swelling breasts,
- It makes me blush, they are so very white.

Mon. 'Oh, men, for flatt'ry and deceit renown'd!

- Thus, when y're young, ye learn it all like him,
- 'Till as your years increase, that strengthens too,
- T'undo poor maids, and make our ruin easy.'

Tell me, Cordelio, for thou oft hast heard
Their friendly converse, and their bosom secrets;
Sometimes, at least, have they not talk'd of me?

Page. Oh, Madam, very wickedly they have talk'd!

But I am afraid to name it; for, they say,
Boys must be whipp'd that tell their master's secrets.

Mon. Fear not, Cordelio; it shall ne'er be known;
For I'll preserve the secret as 'twere mine.
Polydore cannot be so kind as I.

I'll furnish thee with all thy harmless sports,
With pretty toys, and thou shalt be my page.

Page. And truly, Madam, I had rather be so.
Methinks you love me better than my lord;
For he was never half so kind as you are.
What must I do?

Mon. Inform me how thou'lt heard
Castalio, and his brother, use my name.

Page. With all the tenderness of love;
You were the subject of their last discourse:
At first I thought it would have fatal prov'd;
But as the one grew hot, the other cool'd;
And yielded to the frailty of his friend;
At last, after much struggling, 'twas resolv'd——

Mon. What, good, Cordelio?

Page. Not to quarrel for you.

Mon. I wou'd not have 'em; by my dearest hope,
I wou'd not be the argument of strife.
But surely my Castalio won't forsake me,
And make a mock'ry of my easy love.
Went they together?

Page. Yes, to seek you, Madam.
Castalio promis'd Polydore to bring him
Where he alone might meet you,
And fairly try the fortune of his wishes.

Mon. Am I then grown so cheap, just to be made
A common stake, a prize for love in jest?
Was not Castalio very loth to yield it;
Or was it Polydore's unruly passion,
That heighten'd the debate?

Page. The fault was Polydore's.
Castalio play'd with love, and smiling shew'd
The pleasure, not the pangs of his desire.
He said, no woman's smiles should buy his freedom;
And marriage is a mortifying thing.

Mon. Then I am ruin'd, if Castalio's false.
Where is there faith and honour to be found?
Ye gods that guard the innocent, and guide
The weak, protect, and take me to your care.
Oh, but I love him! There's the rock will wreck me!
Why was I made with all my sex's softness,
Yet want the cunning to conceal its follies?
I'll see Castalio, tax him with his falshoods,
Be a true woman, rail, protest my wrongs;
Resolve to hate him, and yet love him still.

Enter Castalio and Polydore.

He comes, the conqueror comes! lie still, my heart,
And learn to bear thy injuries with scorn.

Cast. Madam, my brother begs he may have leave
To tell you something that concerns you nearly.
I leave you, as becomes me, and withdraw.

Mon. My lord, Castalio!

Cast. Madam?

Mon. Have you purpos'd
To abuse me palpably? What means this usage?
Why am I left with Polydore alone?

Cast.

Cast. He best can tell you. Business of importance
Calls me away; I must attend my father.

Mon. Will you then leave me thus?

Cast. But for a moment.

Mon. It has been otherwise; the time has been,
When business might have staid, and I been heard.

Cast. I could for ever hear thee; but this time
Matters of such odd circumstances press me,
That I must go——

[*Exit.*]

Mon. Then go, and, if't be possible, for ever.
Well, my lord Polydore, I guess your business,
And read the ill-natur'd purpose in your eyes.

Pol. If to desire you more than misers wealth,
Or dying men an hour of added life;
If softest wishes, and a heart more true,
Than ever suffer'd yet for love disdain'd,
Speak an ill nature, you accuse me justly.

Mon. Talk not of love, my lord, I must not hear it.

Pol. Who can behold such beauty, and be silent?
Desire first taught us words. Man, when created,
At first alone long wander'd up and down,
Forlorn, and silent as his vassal-beasts;
But when a heav'n-born maid, like you, appear'd,
Strange pleasures fill'd his eyes, and fir'd his heart,
Unloos'd his tongue, and his first talk was love.

Mon. The first created pair indeed were bless'd;
They were the only objects of each other,
Therefore he courted her, and her alone:
But in this peopled world of beauty, where
There's roving room, where you may court, and ruin
A thousand more, why need you talk to me?

Pol. Oh! I could talk to thee for ever. Thus
Eternally admiring, fix and gaze
On those dear eyes; for every glance they send
Darts through my soul, and almost gives enjoyment.

Mon. How can you labour thus for my undoing?
I must confess, indeed, I owe you more
That ever I can hope or think to pay.
There always was a friendship 'twixt our families;
And therefore when my tender parents dy'd,
Whose ruin'd fortunes too expir'd with them,
Your father's pity and his bounty took me,
A poor and helpless orphan, to his care.

18 T H E O R P H A N .

Pol. 'Twas Heav'n ordain'd it so, to make me happy,
Hence with this peevish virtue, 'tis a cheat,
' And those who taught it first were hypocrites.'
Come, these soft tender limbs were made for yielding.

Mon. Here on my knees, by Heaven's blest pow'r I
swear, [Kneels.]

If you persist, I ne'er henceforth will see you,
But rather wander through the world a beggar,
And live on sordid scraps at proud men's doors;
For though to fortune lost, I'll still inherit
My mother's virtues, and my father's honour.

Pol. Intolerable vanity! your sex
Was never in the right! y' are always false
Or silly; ev'n your dresses are not more
Fantastic than your appetites; you think
Of nothing twice. Opinion you have none.
To-day y' are nice, to-morrow not so free;
Now smile, then frown; now sorrowful, then glad;
Now pleas'd, now not; and all you know not why!
Virtue you affect; inconstancy's your practice;
And when your loose desires once get dominion,
No hungry churl feeds coarser at a feast;
Ev'ry rank fool goes down——

Mon. Indeed, my lord,
I own my sex's follies; I have 'em all.
And, to avoid its fault, must fly from you.
Therefore, believe me, could you raise me high
As most fantastic woman's wish could reach,
And lay all nature's riches at my feet;
I'd rather run a savage in the woods
Amongst brute beasts, grow wrinkled and deform'd,
' As wildness and most rude neglect could make me,
So I might still enjoy my honour safe
From the destroying wiles of faithless men.—— [Exit.]

Pol. Who'd be that sordid foolish thing call'd man,
To cringe thus, fawn, and flatter for a pleasure,
Which beasts enjoy so very much above him?
The lusty bull ranges through all the field,
And from the herd singling his female out,
Enjoys her, and abandons her at will.
It shall be so; I'll yet possess my love;
Wait on, and watch her loose unguarded hours;
Then, when her roving thoughts have been abroad,

And brought in wanton wishes to her heart,
I'th' very minute when her virtue nods,
I'll rush upon her in a storm of love,
Beat down her guard of honour all before me,
Surfeit on joys, till ev'n desire grows sick ;
Then, by long absence, liberty regain,
And quite forget the pleasure and the pain.

[*Exeunt Pol. and Page.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *a saloon.*

Enter Acasto, Castalio, and Polydore.

ACASTO.

TO-day has been a day of glorious sport.
When you, Castalio, and your brother left me,
Forth from the thickets rush'd another boar,
So large, he seem'd the tyrant of the woods,
With all his dreadful bristles rais'd up high,
They seem'd a grove of spears upon his back ;
Foaming he came at me, where I was posted,
Best to observe which way he'd lead the chace,
Whetting his huge large tusks, and gaping wide,
As if he already had me for his prey ;
Till brandishing my well-pois'd jav'lin high,
With this bold executing arm, I struck
The ugly, brindled monster to the heart.

Cast. The actions of your life were always wond'rous.

Acast. No flattery, boy ! an honest man can't live
by't ;

It is a little sneaking art, which knaves
Use to cajole and soften fools withal.
If thou hast flattery in thy nature, out with it,
Or send it to a court, for there 'twill thrive.

Pol. Why there ?

Acast. 'Tis, next to money, current there ;

- To be seen daily in as many forms
- As there are sorts of vanities, and men ;
- The supercilious statesman has his sneer,

• To

26 THE ORPHAN.

- To sooth a poor man off with, that can't bribe him;
- The grave dull fellow of small business sooths
- The humourist, and will needs admire his wit.
- Who, without spleen, could see a hot-brain'd atheist,
- Thanking a furly doctor for his sermon;
- Or a grave counsellor meet a smooth young lord,
- Squeeze him by the hand, and praise his good complexion?

Pol. Courts are the places where best manners flourish;

- Where the deserving ought to rise, and fools
- Make shew. Why should I vex and chafe my spleen,
- To see a gaudy coxcomb shine, when I
- Have seen enough to soothe him in his follies,
- And rid him to advantage as I please? —

Acast. Who merit, ought indeed to rise i'th' world;

- But no wise man that's honest shou'd expect it.
- What man of sense would rack his generous mind,
- To practise all the base formalities
- And forms of business, force a grave starch'd face,
- When he's a very libertine in's heart?
- Seem not to know this or that man in public,
- When privately perhaps they meet together,
- And lay the scene of some brave fellow's ruin.
- Such things are done.

Cast. Your lordship's wrongs have been
So great, that you with justice may complain;
But suffer us, whose younger minds ne'er felt
Fortune's decents, to court her as she's fair.
Were she a common mistress, kind to all,
Her worth wou'd cease, and half the world grow idle.

Acast. Go to, y'are fools, and know me not; I've
learn'd

Long since, to bear, revenge, or scorn my wrongs,
According to the value of the doer.
You both wou'd fain be great, and to that end
Desire to do things worthy your ambition.
Go to the camp, preferment's noblest mart,
Where honour ought to have the fairest play, you'll find
Corruption, envy, discontent, and faction,
Almost in ev'ry band. How many men
Have spent their blood in their dear country's service,
Yet now pine under want, while selfish slaves,

That

That e'en wou'd cut their throats whom now they fawn on,
Like deadly locusts, eat the honey up,
Which those industrious bees so hardly toil'd for.

Cast. These precepts suit not with my active mind;
Methinks I would be busy.

Pol. So would I,
Not loiter out my life at home, and know
No farther than one prospect gives me leave.

Acast. Busy your minds then, study arts and men;
Learn how to value merit, though in rags,
And scorn a proud ill-manner'd knave in office.

Enter Serina.

Ser. My lord, my father!

Acast. Blessings on my child,
My little cherub, what hast thou to ask me?

Ser. I bring you, Sir, most glad and welcome news.
The young Chamont, whom you've so often wish'd for.
Is just arriv'd, and entering.

Acast. By my soul,
And all my honours, he's most dearly welcome;
Let me receive him like his father's friend.

Enter Chamont.

Welcome, thou relict of the best lov'd man.
Welcome from all the turmoils and the hazards
Of certain danger and uncertain fortune;
Welcome as happy tidings after fears.

Cham. Words wou'd but wrong the gratitude I owe
you:
Shou'd I begin to speak, my soul's so full,
That I should talk of nothing else all day.

Enter Monimia.

Mon. My brother!

Cha. Oh, my sister! let me hold thee
Long in my arms. I've not beheld thy face
These many days; by night I've often seen thee
In gentle dreams, and satisfy'd my soul
With fancy'd joys, 'till morning cares awak'd me.
Another sister! sure it must be so;
Though I remember well I had but one:
But I feel something in my heart that prompts,
And tells me she has claim and interest there.

Acast. Young soldier, you've not only study'd war,
Courtship

Courtship, I see, has been your practice too,
And may not prove unwelcome to my daughter.

Cha. Is she your daughter! then my heart told true,
And I'm at least her brother by adoption.
For you have made yourself to me a father,
And by that patent I have leave to love her.

Ser. Monimia, thou hast told me men are false,
Will flatter, feign, and make an art of love.
Is Chamont so? No, sure, he's more than man,
Something that's near divine, and truth dwells in him.

Acast. Thus happy, who wou'd envy pompous pow'r,
The luxury of courts, or wealth of cities?
Let there be joy through all the house this day!
In ev'ry room let plenty flow at large,
It is the birth-day of my royal master.
You have not visited the court, Chamont,
Since your return.

Cha. I have no bus'ness there;
I have not slavish temperance enough
T' attend a fav'rite's heels, and watch his smiles,
Bear an ill office done me to my face,
And thank the lord that wrong'd me for his favour.

Acast. This you could do. [To his son.]

Cast. I'd serve my prince.

Acast. Who'd serve him?

Cast. I would, my lord.

Pol. And I; both would.

Acast. Away!

He needs not any servants such as you.
Serve him! he merits more than man can do.
He is so good, praise cannot speak his worth;
So merciful, sure he ne'er slept in wrath;
So just, that were he but a private man,
He cou'd not do a wrong. How wou'd you serve him?

Cast. I'd serve him with my fortune here at home,
And serve him with my person in his wars,
Watch for him, fight for him, bleed for him.

Pol. Die for him,
As ev'ry true-born loyal subject ought.

Acast. Let me embrace you both. Now, by the souls
Of my brave ancestors, I'm truly happy;
For this be even blest my marriage-day,

Blest

Blest be your mother's memory that bore you,
And doubly blest be that auspicious hour
That gave ye birth. ' Yes, my aspiring boys,
' Ye shall have business, when your master wants you.
' You cannot serve a nobler : I have serv'd him ;
' In this old body yet the marks remain
' Of many wounds. I've with this tongue proclaim'd
' His right, e'en in the face of rank rebellion ;
' And when a foul-mouth'd traitor once prophan'd
' His sacred name, with my good sabre drawn,
' E'en at the head of all his giddy rout,
' I rush'd, and clove the rebel to the chine.'

Enter servant.

Serv. My lord, th' expected guests are just arriv'd.

Acast. Go you, and give 'em welcome and reception.

[Exit Cast. Polydore, Serina, &c.]

Cha. My lord, I stand in need of your assistance
In something that concerns my peace and honour.

Acast. Spoke like the son of that brave man I lov'd :
So freely, friendly, we convers'd together.

Whate'er it be, with confidence impart it,
Thou shalt command my fortune and my sword.

Cha. I dare not doubt your friendship, nor your justice,
Your bounty shewn to what I hold most dear,
My orphan sister, must not be forgotten ;

Acast. Pr'ythee no more of that, it grates my nature.

Cha. When our dear parents dy'd, they dy'd together,
One fate surpris'd 'em, and one grave receiv'd 'em ;
My father, with his dying breath, bequeath'd
Her to my love. My mother, as she lay
Languishing by him, call'd me to her side,
Took me in her fainting arms, wept, and embrac'd me ;
Then press'd me close, and as she observ'd my tears,
Kiss'd them away. Said she, Chamont, my son,
By this and all the love I ever shew'd thee,
Be careful of Monimia ; watch her youth ;
Let not her wants betray her to dishonour :
Perhaps kind heav'n may raise some friend. Then sigh'd,
Kiss'd me again ; so bless'd us, and expir'd.
Pardon my grief.

Acast. It speaks an honest nature.

Cha.

Cha. The friend heaven rais'd was you; you took
her up
An infant, to the desert world expos'd,
And prov'd another parent.

Acast. I've not wronged her.

Cha. Far be it from my fears.

Acast. Then why this argument?

Cha. My lord, my nature's jealous, and you'll bear it.

Acast. Go on.

Cha. Great spirits bear misfortunes hardly.
Good offices claim gratitude; and pride,
Where pow'r is wanting, will usurp a little,
And make us, rather than be thought behind-hand,
Pay over-price.

Acast. I cannot guess your drift;
Distrust you me?

Cha. No, but I fear her weakness
May make her pay her debt at any rate;
And, to deal freely with your lordship's goodness,
I've heard a story lately much disturbs me.

Acast. Then first charge her; and if th' offence be
found

Within my reach, though it should touch my nature,
In my own offspring, by the dear remembrance
Of thy brave father, whom my heart rejoic'd in,
I'd prosecute it with severest vengeance.

[*Exit.*

Cham. I thank you from my soul.

Mon. Alas, my brother!

What have I done? and why do you abuse me?
My heart quakes in me; in your settled face,
And clouded brow, methinks, I see my fate.
You will not kill me!

Cha. Pr'ythee, why dost thou talk so?

Mon. Look kindly on me then: I cannot bear
Severity; it daunts, and does amaze me.
My heart's so tender, should you charge me rough,
I should but weep, and answer you with sobbing;
But use me gently like a loving brother,
And search through all the secrets of my soul.

Cha. Fear nothing, I will shew myself a brother,
A tender, honest, and a loving brother,
You've not forgot our father?

Mon:

Mon. I shall never.

Cham. Then you'll remember too, he was a man
That liv'd up to the standard of his honour,
And priz'd that jewel more than mines of wealth.
He'd not have done a shameful thing but once,
Tho' kept in darkness from the world, and hidden,
He could not have forgiven it to himself.
This was the only portion that he left us ;
And I more glory in't, than if posselt
Of all that ever fortune threw on fools.
'Twas a large trust, and must be manag'd nicely ;
Now, if, by any chance, Monimia,
You have soil'd this gem, and taken from its value,
How will you account with me ?

Mon. I challenge envy,
Malice, and all the practices of hell,
To censure all the actions of my past
Unhappy life, and taint me if they can !

Cha. I'll tell thee then ; three nights ago, as I
Lay musing in my bed, all darkness round me,
A sudden damp struck to my heart, cold sweat
Dew'd all my face, and trembling seiz'd my limbs.
My bed shook under me, the curtains started,
And to my tortur'd fancy there appear'd
The form of thee, thus beauteous as thou art ;
Thy garments flowing loose, and in each hand
A wanton lover, who by turns carefs'd thee
With all the freedom of unbounded pleasure.
I snatch'd my sword, and in the very moment
Darted it at the phantom ; straight it left me.
Then rose and call'd for lights, when, Oh, dire omen !
I found my weapon had the arras pierc'd,
Just where that famous tale was interwoven,
How the unhappy Theban slew his father.

Mon. And for this cause my virtue is suspected !
Because in dreams your fancy has been ridden,
I must be tortur'd waking !

Cha. Have a care !
Labour not to be justify'd too fast.
Hear all, and then let justice hold the scale.
What follow'd was the riddle that confounds me.
Through a close lane, as I pursu'd my journey,

And meditating on the last night's vision,
 I spy'd a wrinkled hag, with age grown double,
 Picking dry sticks, and mumbling to herself;
 Her eyes with scalding rheum were gall'd and red;
 Cold palsy shook her head, her hands seem'd wither'd,
 And o'er her crooked shoulders had she wrapp'd
 The tatter'd remnant of an old stripp'd hanging,
 Which serv'd to keep her carcass from the cold;
 So there was nothing of a piece about her.
 Her lower weeds were all o'er coarsely patch'd
 With diff'rent colour'd rags, black, red, white, yellow,
 And seem'd to speak variety of wretchedness.
 I ask'd her of my way, which she inform'd me;
 Then crav'd my charity, and bade me hasten
 To save a sister: at that word I started!

Mon. The common cheat of beggars, every day
 They flock about our doors, pretend to gifts
 Of prophecy, and telling fools their fortunes.

Cha. Oh! but she told me such a tale, Monimia,
 As in it bore great circumstance of truth;
 Castalio and Polydore, my sister.

Mon. Hah!

Cha. What, alter'd! does your courage fail you!
 Now, by my father's soul, the witch was honest.
 Answer me, if thou hast not lost to them
 Thy honour at a fordid game?

Mon. I will,
 I must, so hardly my misfortune loads me,
 That both have offer'd me their loves most true.

Cha. And 'tis as true too, they have both undone thee.

Mon. Though they both with earnest vows
 Have prest my heart, if e'er in thought I yielded
 To any but Castalio —

Cha. But Calisto!

Mon. Still, will you cross the line of my discourse.
 Yes, I confess that he has won my soul
 By gen'rous love, and honourable vows,
 Which he this day appointed to complete,
 And make himself by holy marriage mine.

Cha. Art thou then spotless? Hast thou still preserv'd
 Thy virtue white, without a blot, untainted?

Mon.

Mon. When I'm unchaste may Heav'n reject my pray'rs!

Or more, to make me wretched, may you know it!

Cba. Oh, then, Monimia, art thou dearer to me Than all the comforts ever yet blest man.

But let not marriage bait thee to thy ruin.

Trust not a man; we are by nature false,
Dissembling, subtil, cruel, and unconstant.

When a man talks of love, with caution trust him;

But if he swears, he'll certainly deceive thee.

I charge thee let no more Castalio soothe thee;

Avoid it, as thou would'st preserve the peace

Of a poor brother, to whose soul thou'rt precious.

Mon. I will.

Cba. Appear as cold, when next you meet, as great ones

When merit begs; then shalt thou see how soon
His heart will cool, and all his pains grow easy. [*Exit.*

Mon. Yes, I will try him; torture him severely;
For, Oh, Castalio! thou too much hast wrong'd me,
In leaving me to Polydore's ill usage.

He comes; and for once, Oh, love, stand neuter,
Whilst a hard part's perform'd! for I must tempt
Wound his soft nature, though my heart akes for't.

[*Exit.*

Enter Castalio.

Cast. Monimia, Monimia!—She's gone;

And seem'd to part with anger in her eyes;

I am a fool, and she has found my weakness;

She uses me already like a slave

Fast bound in chains, to be chastis'd at will.

'Twas not well done to trifle with my brother;

I might have trusted him with all the secret,

Open'd my silly heart, and shewn it bare.—

But then he loves her too; but not like me:

I am a doating honest slave, design'd

For bondage, marriage bonds, which I have sworn

To wear. It is the only thing I e'er

Hid from his knowledge; and he'll sure forgive

The first transgression of a wretched friend,

Betray'd to love, and all its little follies.

[*Exit.*

Enter

Enter Polydore and Page at the Door.

Pol. Here place yourself, and watch my brother throughly.

If he should chance to meet Monimia, make
Just observation on each word and action ;
Pass not one circumstance without remark :
Sir, 'tis your office ; do't, and bring we word. [*Exit Pol.*]

Enter Monimia and Castalio.

Cast. Monimia, my angel ! 'twas not kind
To leave me like a turtle here alone,
To droop and mourn the absence of my mate.
When thou art from me, every place is desert,
And I, methinks, am savage and forlorn ;
Thy presence only 'tis can make me blest,
Heal my unquiet mind, and tune my soul.

Mon. Oh, the bewitching tongues of faithless men !
'Tis thus the false hyæna makes her moan
To draw the pitying traveller to her den.
Your sex are so, such false dissemblers all,
With sighs and plaints y'entice poor women's hearts,
And all that pity you are made your prey.

Cast. What means my love ? Oh, how have I deserv'd
This language from the sov'reign of my joys ?
Stop, stop those tears, Monimia, for they fall,
Like baneful dew from a distemper'd sky ;
I feel 'em chill me to my very heart.

Mon. Oh, you are false, Castalio, most forsworn !
Attempt no farther to delude my faith ;
My heart is fixt, and you shall shake't no more.

Cast. Who told you so ? What hell-bred villain durst
Prophane the sacred business of my love ?

Mon. Your brother, knowing on what terms I'm here,
The unhappy object of your father's charity,
Licentiously discours'd to me of love,
And durst affront me with his brutal passion.

Cast. 'Tis I have been to blame, and only I ;
False to my brother, and unjust to thee.
For, Oh ! he loves thee too, and this day own'd it,
Tax'd me with mine, and claim'd a right above me.

Mon. And was your love so very tame, to shrink ;
Or rather than lose him, abandon me ?

Cast. I, knowing him precipitate and rash,

To

To calm his heat, and to conceal my happiness,
Seem'd to comply with his unruly will;
Talk'd as he talk'd, and granted all he ask'd;
Lest he in rage might have our loves betray'd,
And I for ever had Monimia lost.

Mon. Could you then? did you? can you own it too?
'Twas poorly done, unworthy of yourself!
And I can never think you meant me fair.

Cast. Is this Monimia? surely no; till now
I ever thought her dove-like, soft, and kind.
Who trusts his heart with woman's surely lost.
You were made fair on purpose to undo us,
While greedily we snatch th' alluring bait,
And ne'er distrust the poison that it hides.

Mon. When love ill-plac'd would find a means to
break——

Cast. It never wants pretences or excuse.

Mon. Man therefore was a lord-like creature made,
Rough as the winds and as inconstant too:
A lofty aspect given him for command,
Easily soften'd when he would betray.
Like conqu'ring tyrants, you our breasts invade,
Where you are pleas'd to forage for a while;
But soon you find new conquests out, and leave
The ravag'd province ruinate and waste.
If so, Castalio, you have serv'd my heart,
I find that desolation's settled there,
And I shall ne'er recover peace again.

Cast. Who can hear this and bear an equal mind?
Since you will drive me from you, I must go;
But, Oh, Monimia! When thou hast banish'd me,
No creeping slave, though tractable and dull
As artful woman for her ends would chuse,
Shall ever dote as I have done: for, Oh!
No tongue my pleasure nor my pain can tell,
'Tis heaven to have thee, and without thee hell.

Mon. Castalio, stay! we must not part. I find
My rage ebbs out, and love flows in apace..
These little quarrels love must needs forgive,
' They rouse up drowsy thoughts, and wake my soul.'
Oh! charm me with the music of thy tongue,

I'm

I'm ne'er so blest as when I hear thy vows,
And listen to the language of thy heart.

Cast. Where am I ! surely Paradise is round me,
Sweets planted by the hand of Heav'n grow here,
And every sense is full of thy perfection.
To hear thee speak might calm a mad man's frenzy,
Till by attention he forgot his sorrows ;
But to behold thy eyes, th' amazing beauties,
Might make him rage again with love, as I do.
' To touch thee's Heaven, but to enjoy thee. Oh !'
Thou nature's whole perfection in one piece ;
Sure framing thee Heaven took unusual care,
As its own beauty it design'd thee fair ;
And form'd thee by the best lov'd angel there. [Ex.]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *a garden.*

Enter Polydore, and Page.

POLYDORE.

WERE they so kind ? Express it to me all.
In words, 'twill make me think I saw it too.

Page. At first I thought they had been mortal foes ;
Monimia rag'd, Castalio grew disturb'd ;
Each thought the other wrong'd ; yet both so haughty,
They scorn'd submission : though love all the while
The rebel play'd, and scarce could be contain'd.

Pol. But what succeeded ?

Page. Oh, 'twas wond'rous pretty !
For of a sudden all the storm was past,
A gentle calm of love succeeded it ;
Monimia sigh'd and blush'd, Castalio swore ;
As you, my lord, I well remember, did
'To my young sister in the orange grove,
When I was first preferr'd to be your page.

Pol. Happy Castalio ! Now by my great soul,
My ambitious soul, that languishes to glory,
I'll have her yet, by my best hopes I will.
She shall be mine, in spite of all her arts.

But for Castalio why was I refus'd ?
 Has he supplanted me by some foul play ?
 Traduc'd my honour ? Death ! he durst not do't.
 It must be so : we parted, and he met her,
 Half to compliance brought by me ; surpriz'd
 Her sinking virtue, till she yielded quite.
 So poachers basely pick up tired game,
 While the fair hunter's cheated of his prey.
 Boy !

Page. My lord !

Pol. Go to your chamber, and prepare your lute :
 Find out some song to please me, that describes
 Womens hypocrisies, their subtil wiles,
 Betraying smiles, feign'd tears, inconstancies ;
 Their painted outsides, and corrupted minds ;
 The sum of all their follies, and their falshoods.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Oh, the unhappy't tidings tongue e'er told !

Pol. The matter !

Serv. Oh ! your father, my good master,
 As with his guests he sat in mirth rais'd high,
 And chas'd the goblet round the joyful board,
 A sudden trembling seiz'd on all his limbs ;
 His eyes distorted grew ; his visage pale ;
 His speech forsook him ; life itself seem'd fled,
 And all his friends are waiting now about him.

Enter Acasto leaning on two.

Acast. Support me ; give me air ; I'll yet recover.
 'Twas but a slip decaying nature made ;
 For she grows weary near her journey's end.
 Where are my sons ? Come near, my Polydore ;
 Your brother ; where's Castalio ?

Serv. My lord,
 I've search'd, as you commanded, all the house ;
 He and Monimia are not to be found.

Acast. Not to be found ! then where are all my
 friends ? 'Tis well ;

I hope they'll pardon an unhappy fault
 My unmanly infirmity has made !
 Death could not come in a more welcome hour ;
 For I'm prepar'd to meet him, and, methinks,
 Would live and die with all my friends about me.

Enter

Enter Castalio and Monimia.

Cast. Angels preserve my dearest father's life,
Bless it with long uninterrupted days !
Oh ! may he live till time itself decay,
'Till good men with him dead, or I offend him !

Acast. Thank you, Castalio ; give me both your hands,
And bear me up, I'd walk.—So, now methinks,
I appear as great as Hercules himself,
Supported by the pillars he had rais'd.

Cast. My lord, your chaplain.

Acast. Let the good man enter.

Enter Chaplain.

Chap. Heav'n guard your lordship, and restore your health.

Acast. I have provided for thee, if I die.
No fawning ! 'tis a scandal to thy office.

My sons, as thus united, ever live ;
And for th' estate, you'll find when I am dead,
I have divided it betwixt you both,
Equally parted, as you shar'd my love ;
Only to sweet Monimia I've bequeath'd
Ten thousand crowns ; a little portion for her,
To wed her honourably as she's born.

Be not less friends because you're brothers ; ' shun
' The man that's singular, his mind's unsound,
' His spleen o'erweighs his brains ; but above all,
' Avoid the politic, the factious fool,
' The busy, buzzing, talking, harden'd knave,
' The quaint smooth rogue, that sins against his reason,
' Calls saucy loud suspicion, public zeal,
' And mutiny, the dictates of his spirit :
' Be very careful how you make new friends.
' Men read not morals now : 'twas a custom :
' But all are to their father's vices born ;
' And in their mother's ignorance are bred.
' Let marriage be the last mad thing you do,
' For all the sins and follies of the past.
' If you have children, never give them knowledge,
' 'Twill spoil their fortune ; fools are all the fashion ;
' If you've religion, keep it to yourselves ;
' Atheists will else make use of toleration,
' And laugh you out on't. Never shew religion,

• Except you mean to pass for knaves of conscience,
 'And cheat believing fools that think ye honest.'

Enter Serina.

Ser. My father!

Acast. My heart's darling!

Ser. Let my knees

Fix to the earth. Ne'er let my eyes have rest,
 But wake and weep, till heaven restore my father.

Acast. Rise to my arms, and thy kind pray'rs are
 answer'd.

For thou'rt a wond'rous extract of all goodness,
 Born for my joy, and no pains felt when near thee.
 Chamont!

Enter Chamont.

Cha. My lord, may't prove not an unlucky omen.
 Many I see are waiting round about you,
 And I am come to ask a blessing too!

Acast. May't thou be happy!

Cha. Where?

Acast. In all thy wishes.

Cha. Confirm me so, and make this fair one mine;
 I am unpractis'd in the trade of courtship,
 And know not how to deal love out with art:
 Onsets in love seem best like those in war,
 Fierce, resolute, and done with all the force;
 So I would open my whole heart at once,
 And pour out the abundance of my soul.

Acast. What says Serina? Canst thou love a soldier?
 One born to honour, and to honour bred?
 One that has learn'd to treat e'en foes with kindness;
 To wrong no good man's fame, nor praise himself?

Ser. Oh! name not love, for that's ally'd to joy,
 And joy must be a stranger to my heart,
 When you're in danger. May Chamont's good fortune
 Render him lovely to some happier maid!
 Whilst I at friendly distance see him blest,
 Praise the kind gods, and wonder at his virtues.

Acast. Chamont, pursue her, conquer and possess her,
 And, as my son, a third of all my fortune
 Shall be thy lot.

But keep thy eyes from wand'ring, man of frailty.
 Beware the dangerous beauty of the wanton;

Shun

Shun their enticements ; ruin like a vulture
 Waits on their conquests : falshood too's their business,
 They put false beauty off to all the world,
 Use false endearments to the fools that love 'em,
 And when they marry, to their silly husbands,
 They bring false virtue, broken fame and fortune.

Mon. Hear ye that, my lord ?

Pol. Yes, my fair monitor, old men always talk thus.

Acst. Chamont, you told me of some doubts that
 press'd you,

Are you yet satisfy'd that I'm your friend ?

Cha. My lord, I would not lose that satisfaction
 For any blessing I could wish for.

As to my fears, already I have lost 'em ;

'They ne'er shall vex me more, nor trouble you.

Acst. I thank you. Daughter you must do so too.
 My friends, 'tis late ;

Now my disorder seems all past and over,

And I ; methinks, begin to feel new health.

Cast. Would you but rest, it might restore you quite ;

Acst. Yes, I'll to bed ; old men must humour
 weakness :

Let me have music then, to lull and chase

This melancholy thought of death away.

Good-night, my friends ; heav'n guard ye all ! Good-
 night !

To-morrow early we'll salute the day,

Find out new pleasures, and redeem lost time.

[*Exeunt all but Chamont and Chaplain.*]

Cha. Hift, hift, Sir Gravity, a word with you.

Chap. With me, Sir !

Cha. If you're at leisure, Sir, we'll waste an hour.

'Tis yet too soon to sleep, and 'twill be charity

To lend your conversation to a stranger.

Chap. Sir, you're a soldier ?

Cha. Yes.

Chap. I love a soldier :

And had been one myself, but that my parents

Would make me what you see me : yet I'm honest,

For all I wear black.

Cha. And that's a wonder.

Have you had long dependence on this family ?

Chap.

Chap. I have not thought it so, because my time's
Spent pleasantly. My lord's not haughty nor imperious,
Nor I gravely whimsical; he has good-nature,
And I have manners.

His sons too are civil to me, because
I do not pretend to be wiser than they are.
I meddle with no man's business but my own;
I rise in a morning early, study moderately,
Eat and drink chearfully, live soberly,
Take my innocent pleasures freely;
So meet with respect, and am not the jest of the family.

Cba. I'm glad you are so happy.
A pleasant fellow this, and may be useful. [Aside.
Knew you my father, the old Chamont?

Chap. I did, and was most sorry when we lost him.

Cba. Why, didst thou love him?

Chap. Ev'ry body lov'd him; besides he was my master's friend.

Cba. I could embrace thee for that very notion.
If thou didst love my father, I could think
Thou wouldst not be an enemy to me.

Chap. I can be no man's foe.

Cba. Then pr'ythee tell me,
Think'st thou the lord Castalio loves my sister?
' Nay, never start. Come, come, I know thy office
' Opens thee all the secrets of the family.
' Then if thou'rt honest, use this freedom kindly.'

Chap. Love your sister!

Cba. Ay, love her.

' *Chap.* Sir, I never ask'd him,
' And wonder you should ask it me.

' *Cba.* Nay, but thou'rt an hypocrite; is there not one
' Of all thy tribe that's honest? In your schools
' The pride of your superiors makes ye slaves;
' Ye all live loathsome, sneaking, servile lives;
' Not free enough to practise gen'rous truth,
' Tho' ye pretend to teach it to the world.

' *Chap.* I would deserve a better thought from you.

' *Cba.* If thou wouldst have me not condemn thy office
' And character, think all thy brethren knaves,
' Thy trade a cheat, and thou its worst professor,
' Inform me; for I tell thee, priest, I'll know.'

Chap.

Chap. Either he loves her, or he much has wrong'd her.

Cba. How ! wrong'd her ? Have a care, for this may lay
A scene of mischief to undo us all.

But tell me, wrong'd her, saidst thou ?

Chap. Ay, Sir, wrong'd her.

Cba. This is a secret worth a monarch's fortune :
What shall I give thee for't ? Thou dear physician
Of sickly souls, unfold this riddle to me,
And comfort mine——

Chap. I would hide nothing from you willingly.

* *Cba.* Nay, then again thou'rt honest. Would'st thou
tell me ?

* *Chap.* Yes, if I durst.

* *Cba.* Why, what affrights thee ?

* *Chap.* You do.

* Who are not to be trusted with the secret.

* *Cba.* Why, I am no fool.

* *Chap.* So indeed you say.

* *Cba.* Pr'ythee be serious then.

* *Chap.* You see I am so,

* And hardly shall be mad enough to-night

* To trust you with my ruin.

* *Cba.* Art thou then

* So far concern'd in't ? What has been thy office ?

* Curse on that formal steady villain's face !

* Just so do all bawds look ; nay, bawds, they say,

* Can pray upon occasion, talk of heav'n,

* Turn up their goggling eye-balls, rail at vice,

* Dissemble, lie, and preach like any priest.

* Art thou a bawd ?

* *Chap.* Sir, I'm not often us'd thus,

* *Cba.* Be just then.

* *Chap.* So I shall be to the trust

* That's laid upon me.

Cba. By the reverenc'd soul

Of that great honest man that gave me being,

Tell me but what thou know'st concerns my honour,

And if I e'er reveal it to thy wrong,

May this good sword ne'er do me right in battle !

May I ne'er know that blessed peace of mind,

That dwells in good and pious men like thee !

Chap. I see your temper's mov'd, and I will trust you.

Cba.

Cha. Wilt thou?

Chap. I will; but if it ever 'scape you——

Cham. It never shall.

Chap. Swear then.

Cha. I do, by all

' That's dear to me, by th' honour of my name,

' And by that Pow'r I serve, it never shall.'

Chap. Then this good day, when all the house was busy,
When mirth and kind rejoicing fill'd each room,
As I was walking in the grove I met them.

Cha. What! met them in the grove together? Tell me
How, walking, standing, sitting, lying, hah!

Chap. I, by their own appointment, met them there,
Receiv'd their marriage-vows, and join'd their hands.

Cha. How! marry'd!

Chap. Yes, Sir.

Cha. Then my soul's at peace.

But why would you so long delay to give it?

Chap. Not knowing what reception it may find
With old Acasto; may be I was too cautious
To trust the secret from me.

Cha. What's the cause

I cannot guess, though it is my sister's honour

I do not like this marriage,

Huddled i' th' dark, and done at too much venture;

The business looks with an unlucky face.

Keep still the secret; for it ne'er shall 'scape me,

Not ev'n to them, the new matched pair. Farewel.

Believe my truth, and knew me for thy friend, [*Exit.*

Enter Castalio and Monimia.

Cast. Young Chamont and the chaplain! sure 'tis they!

No matter what's contriv'd, or who consulted,

Since my Monimia's mine; though this sad look

Seems no good boding omen to her blifs;

Else pr'ythee tell me why that look cast down?

Why that sad sigh as if thy heart was breaking?

Mon. Castalio, I am thinking what we've done.

The heavenly powers were sure displeas'd to-day;

For at the ceremony as we stood,

And as your hand was kindly join'd with mine;

As the good priest pronounc'd the sacred words,

Passion grew big, and I could not forbear,

Tears drown'd my eyes, and trembling seiz'd my soul.
What shou'd that mean ?

Cast. Oh, thou art tender all !

Gentle and kind as sympathising nature !

' When a sad story has been told, I've seen
' Thy little breasts, with soft compassion swell'd,
' Shove up and down, and heave like dying birds ;
' But now let fear be banish'd, think no more
' Of danger ; for there's safety in my arms ;
' Let them receive thee. Heav'n grows jealous now ;
' Sure she's too good for any mortal creature !
' I could grow wild, and praise thee ev'n to madness.'

But wherefore do I dally with my bliss ?

The night's far spent, and day draws on apace ;
To bed, my love, and wake till I come thither.

Pol. So hot, my brother ! [*Polydore at the door.*]

Mon. 'Twill be impossible ;

You know your father's chamber's next to mine,
And the least noise will certainly alarm him.

Cast. Impossible ! impossible ! alas !

Is't possible to live one hour without thee ?

' Let me behold those eyes ; they'll tell me truth.
' Hast thou no longing ? art thou still the same
' Cold, icy virgin ? No ; thou'rt alter'd quite :
' Haste, haste to bed, and let loose all thy wishes.'

Mon. 'Tis but one night, my lord ; I pray be rul'd.

Cast. Try if thou'st power to stop a flowing tide,
Or in a tempest make the seas be calm ;
And when that's done, I'll conquer my desires.
No more, my blessing. What shall be the sign ?
When shall I come ? for to my joys I'll steal,
As if I ne'er had paid my freedom for them.

Mon. Just three soft strokes upon the chamber door ;
And at that signal you shall gain admittance :
But speak not the least word ; for if you shou'd,
'Tis surely heard, and all will be betray'd.

Cast. Oh ! doubt it not, - Monimia ; our joys
Shall be as silent as the extatic bliss
Of souls, that by intelligence converse.
Immortal pleasures shall our senses drown,
Thought shall be lost, and every power dissolv'd.
Away, my love ; ' first take this kiss. Now haste.'

I long

I long for that to come, yet grudge each minute past.

[Exit Mon.]

My brother wand'ring too so late this way !

Pol. Castalio !

Cast. My Polydore, how dost thou ?

How does our father ? Is he well recover'd ?

Pol. I left him happily repos'd to rest ;
He's still as gay as if his life were young.
But how does fair Monimia ?

Cast. Doubtless, well:

A cruel beauty, with her conquest pleas'd,
Is always joyful, and her mind in health.

Pol. Is she the same Monimia still she was ?
May we not hope she's made of mortal mold ?

Cast. She's not woman else :
The' I'm grown weary of this tedious hoping ;
We've in a barren desert stray'd too long.

Pol. Yet may relief be unexpected found,
And love's sweet manna cover all the field.
Met ye to-day ?

Cast. No ; she has still avoided me :
Her brother too is jealous of her grown.
And has been hinting something to my father.
I wish I'd never meddled with the matter :
And would enjoin thee, Polydore——

Pol. To what ?

Cast. To leave this peevish beauty to herself.

Pol. What, quit my love ? As soon I'd quit my post
In fight, and, like a coward, run away.
No, by my stars I'll chase her till she yields
To me, or meets her rescue in another.

Cast. Nay, she has beauty that might shake the leagues
Of mighty kings, and set the world at odds :
But I have wond'rous reasons on my side,
That wou'd persuade thee, were they known.

Pol. Then speak 'em :
What are they ? Came ye to her window here,
To learn 'em now ? Castalio, have a care ;
Use honest dealing with a friend and brother.
Believe me, I'm not with my love so blinded,
But can discern your purpose to abuse me.
Quit your pretences to her.

Cast. Grant I do ;

You love capitulations, Polydore,
And but upon conditions would oblige me.

Pol. You say you've reasons; why are they conceal'd?

Cast. To-morrow I may tell you.

Pol. Why not now?

Cast. It is a matter of such consequence,
As I must well consult ere I reveal.
But pr'ythee cease to think I would abuse thee,
'Till more be known.

Pol. When you, Castalio, cease
To meet Monimia unknown to me,
And then deny it slavishly, I'll cease
To think Castalio faithless to his friend.
Did not I see you part this very moment?

Cast. It seems you've watch'd me, then?

Pol. I scorn the office.

Cast. Pr'ythee avoid a thing thou may'st repent.

Pol. That is henceforward making leagues with you.

Cast. Nay, if ye're angry, Polydore, good night. [*Exit.*]

Pol. Good night, Castalio, if ye're in such haste.

He little thinks I've overheard th' appointment;
But to his chamber's gone to wait awhile,
Then come and take possession of my love.
This is the utmost point of all my hopes;
Or now she must, or never can be mine.
Oh, for a means now, how to counterplot,
And disappoint this happy elder brother:
In ev'ry thing we do or undertake
He soars above me, mount what height I can,
And keeps the start he got of me in birth.
Cordelio!

Enter Page.

Page. My Lord!

Pol. Come hither, boy.

Thou hast a pretty, forward, lying face,
And may'st in time expect preferment. Canst thou
Pretend to secrecy, cajole and flatter
Thy master's follies, and assist his pleasures?

Page. My lord, I could do any thing for you,
And ever be a very faithful boy.
Command, whate'er's your pleasure I'll observe;
Be it to run, or watch, or to convey.

A letter

A letter to a beauteous lady's bosom ;
At least, I am not dull, and soon should learn.

Pol. 'Tis pity, then, thou should'st not be employ'd.
Go to my brother, he's in his chamber now,
Undressing, and preparing for his rest :
Find out some means to keep him up a while ;
Tell him a pretty story, that may please
His ear ; invent a tale, no matter what :
If he should ask of me, tell him I'm gone
To bed, and sent you there to know his pleasure,
Whether he'll hunt to-morrow. Well said, Polydore,
Dissemble with thy brother ! that's one point. [*Aside.*]
But do not leave him till he's in his bed,
Or if he chance to walk again this way,
Follow, and do not quit him, but seem fond
To do him little offices of service.
Perhaps at last it may offend him ; then
Retire, and wait till I come in. Away :
Succeed in this, and be employ'd again.

Page. Doubt not, my lord. He has been always kind
To me ; would often set me on his knee,
Then give me sweet-meats, call me pretty boy,
And ask me what the maids talk'd of at nights.

Pol. Run quickly, then, and prosperous be thy wishes.
[*Exit Page.*]

Here I'm alone, and fit for mischief ; now
To cheat this brother, wil't be honest that ?
I heard the sign she order'd him to give.
Oh, for the art of Proteus, but to change
Th' unhappy Polydore to blest Castalio !
She's not so well acquainted with him yet,
But I may fit her arms as well as he.
Then when I'm happily possess'd of more
Than sense can think, all loosen'd into joy,
To hear my disappointed brother come,
And give the unregarded signal ; Oh,
What a malicious pleasure will that be !
Just three soft strokes against the chamber door ;
But speak not the least word, for if you should,
It's surely heard, and we are both betray'd.
How I adore a mistress that contrives
With care to lay the business of her joys ;

One that has wit to charm the very soul,
 And give a double relish to delight !
 Blest Heav'ns, assist me but in this dear hour,
 And my kind stars be but propitious now,
 Dispose of me hereafter as you please.

Monimia ! Monimia !

[*Gives the sign.*]

[*Maid at the window.*] Who's there ?

Pol. 'Tis I.

Maid. My lord Castalio ?

Pol. The same.

How does my love, my dear Monimia ?

Maid. Oh !

She wonders much at your unkind delay ;
 You've staid so long that at each little noise
 The wind but makes, she asks if you are coming.

Pol. Tell her I'm here, and let the door be open'd,

[*Maid descends.*]

Now boast, Castalio, triumph now, and tell
 Thyself strange stories of a promis'd bliss.

[*The door unbolts.*]

It opens ! Hah ! what means my trembling flesh ?

Limbs, do your office, and support me well,

Bear me to her, then fail me if you can.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Castalio and Page.

Page. Indeed, my lord, 'twill be a lovely morning ;
 Pray let us hunt.

Cast. Go, you're an idle prattler.

I'll stay at home to-morrow ; if your lord

'Thinks fit, he may command my hounds. Go, leave me,
 I must to bed.

Page. I'll wait upon your lordship,
 If you think fit, and sing you to repose.

Cast. No, my kind boy, the night is too far wasted ;
 My senses are quite disrob'd of thought,
 And ready all with me to go to rest.

Good night. Commend me to my brother.

Page. Oh !

You never heard the last new song I learn'd ;

It is the finest, prettiest song indeed,

Of my lord and my lady, you know who, that were caught
 Together, you know where. My lord, indeed it is.

Cast.

Cast. You must be whipp'd, youngster, if you get such songs as those are.

What means this boy's impertinence to-night ?

Page. Why, what must I sing, pray, my dear lord ?

Cast. Psalms, child, psalms.

Page. Oh, dear me ! boys that go to school learn psalms :

But pages, that are better bred, sing lampoons.

Cast. Well, leave me. I'm weary.

Page. Oh ! but you promised me, the last time I told you what colour my lady Monimia's stockings were of, and that she garter'd them above knee, that you would give me a little horse to go a hunting upon, so you did. I'll tell you no more stories, except you keep your word with me.

Cast. Well, go, you trifler, and to-morrow ask me.

Page. Indeed, my lord, I can't abide to leave you.

Cast. Why, wert thou instructed to attend me !

Page. No, no, indeed, my lord, I was not ;

But I know what I know.

Cast. What dost thou know ? Death ! what can all this mean ?

Page. Oh ! I know who loves somebody.

Cast. What's that to me, boy ?

Page. Nay, I know who loves you too.

Cast. That's a wonder ! pr'ythee tell it me.

Page. 'Tis—'tis—I know who—but will
You give me the horse, then ?

Cast. I will, my child.

Page. It is my lady Monimia, look you ; but don't you tell her I told you : she'll give me no more play-things then. I heard her say so, as she lay a-bed, man.

Cast. Talk'd she of me when in her bed, Cordelio ?

Page. Yes, and I sung her the song you made, too ; and she did so sigh, and so look with her eyes ; and her breasts did so lift up and down, I could have found in my heart to have beat 'em, for they made me ashamed.

Cast. Hark ! what's that noise ?

Take this, begone, and leave me.

You knave, you little flatterer, get you gone. [*Ex. Page.*]

Surely it was a noise ! hift——only fancy ;

For all is hush'd, as nature were retir'd,

‘ And

‘ And the perpetual motion standing still.’
 So much she from her work appears to cease,
 And ev’ry warring element’s at peace;
 All the wild herds are in the coverts couch’d;
 The fishes to their banks or ouze repair’d,
 And to the murmurs of the waters sleep;
 The feeling air’s at rest, and feels no noise,
 Except of some soft breeze among the trees,
 Rocking the harmless birds that rest upon ’em.

’Tis now, that, guided by my love, I go
 To take possession of Monimia’s arms.
 Sure Polydore’s by this time gone to bed.
 At midnight thus the us’rer steals untrack’d,
 To make a visit to his hoarded gold,
 And feasts his eyes upon the shining mammon. [*Knocks.*]
 She hears me not; sure she already sleeps,
 Her wishes could not brook so long delay,
 And her poor heart has beat itself to rest. [*Knocks again.*]

‘ Monimia! my angel—hah—not yet—
 ‘ How long’s the shortest moment of delay,
 ‘ To a heart impatient of its pangs like mine,
 ‘ In fight of ease, and panting to the goal. [*Knocks again.*]
 Once more—

Maid. [*At the window.*] Who’s there?
 That comes thus rudely to disturb our rest?

Cast. ’Tis I.

Maid. Who are you? What’s your name?

Cast. Suppose the lord Castalio.

Maid. I know you not.

The lord Castalio has no business here.

Cast. Ha! have a care; what can this mean?
 Whoe’er thou art, I charge thee, to Monimia fly;
 Tell her I’m here, and wait upon my doom.

Maid. Whoe’er you are, ye may repent this outrage.
 My lady must not be disturb’d. Good night.

Cast. She must; tell her she shall. Go, I’m in haste,
 And bring her tidings from the state of love;
 They’re all in consultation met together,
 How to reward my truth, and crown her vows.

Maid. Sure the man’s mad?

Cast. Or this will make me so.
 Obey me, or by all the wrongs I suffer,

I'll scale the window, and come in by force,
Let the sad consequence be what it will;
This creature's trifling folly makes me mad!

Maid. My lady's answer is, you may depart.
She says she knows you; you are Polydore,
Sent by Castalio, as you were to-day,
T' affront and do her violence again.

Cast. I'll not believ't.

Maid. You may, Sir.

Cast. Curses blast thee!

Maid. Well, 'tis a fine cool ev'ning; and I hope
May cure the raging fever in your blood.
Good night.

Cast. And farewell all that's just in women!
This is contriv'd; a studied trick, to abuse
My easy nature, and torment my mind.
' Sure now she's bound me fast, and means to lord it,
' To rein me hard, and ride me at her will,
' 'Till by degrees she shape me into fool,
' For all her future uses. Death and torment!
' 'Tis impudence to think my soul will bear it.
' Oh, I could grow ev'n wild, and tear my hair!
' 'Tis well, Monimia, that thy empire's short;
Let but to-morrow, but to-morrow come,
And try if all thy arts appease my wrong;
'Till when, be this detested place my bed. [*Lies down.*
Where I will ruminate on woman's ills;
Laugh at myself, and curse th' inconstant sex;
Faithless Monimia! Oh, Monimia!

Enter Ernesto.

Ern. Either

My sense has been deluded, or this way
I heard the sound of sorrow; 'tis late night,
And none, whose mind's at peace, would wander now.

Cast. Who's there?

' *Ern.* A friend.

' *Cast.* If thou art so, retire,
And leave this place; for I would be alone.'

Ern. Castalio! My lord, why in this posture,
Stretch'd on the ground? Your honest, true old servant,
Your poor Ernesto, cannot see you thus.
Rise, I beseech you.

Cast.

Cast. If thou art Ernesto,
As by thy honesty thou seem'st to be,
Once leave me to my folly.

Ern. I can't leave you,
And not the reason know of your disorders.
Remember how, when young, I in my arms
Have often borne you, pleas'd you in your pleasures,
And sought an early share in your affection :
Do not discard me now, but let me serve you.

Cast. Thou canst not serve me.

Ern. Why ?

Cast. Because my thoughts
Are full of woman ; thou, poor wretch, art past 'em.

Ern. I hate the sex.

Cast. Then I'm thy friend, Ernesto. [Rises.]
I'd leave the world for him that hates a woman.
Woman, the fountain of all human frailty !
What mighty ills have not been done by woman ?
Who was't betray'd the capitol ? A woman.
Who lost Mark Anthony the world ? A woman.
Who was the cause of a long ten years war,
And laid at last old Troy in ashes ? Woman !
Destructive, damnable, deceitful woman !
Woman, to man first as a blessing giv'n ;
When innocence and love were in their prime,
Happy a while in Paradise they lay,
But quickly woman long'd to go astray ;
Some foolish, new adventure needs must prove,
And the first devil she saw, she chang'd her love ;
To his temptations lewdly she inclin'd
Her soul, and for an apple damn'd mankind.

[Exeunt.]

END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT

A C T IV.

SCENE, *a saloon.*

ACASTO.

BLEST be the morning that has brought me health;
 A happy rest has soften'd pain away,
 And I'll forget it, though my mind's not well;
 A heavy melancholy clogs my heart;
 I droop and sigh, I know not why. Dark dreams,
 Sick fancy's children, have been over-busy,
 And all the night play'd farces in my brain.
 Methought I heard the midnight raven cry;
 Wak'd with th' imagin'd noise, my curtain seem'd
 To start, and at my feet my sons appear'd,
 Like ghosts, all pale and stiff; I strove to speak,
 But could not: suddenly the forms were lost,
 And seem'd to vanish in a bloody cloud.
 'Twas odd, and for the present, shook my thoughts;
 But 'twas th' effect of my distemper'd blood;
 And when the health's disturb'd, the mind's unruly.

Enter Polydore.

Good morning, Polydore.

Pol. Heav'n keep your lordship.

Acast. Have you yet seen Castalio to-day?

Pol. My Lord, 'tis early day; he's hardly risen.

Acast. Go, call him up, and meet me in the chapel.

[Exit Polydore.]

I cannot think all has gone well to-night;
 For as I waking lay (and sure my sense
 Was then my own) methought I heard my son
 Castalio's voice; but it seem'd low, and mournful;
 Under my window, too, I thought I heard it.
 M' untoward fancy could not be deceiv'd
 In every thing; and I will search the truth out.

Enter Monimia.

Already up, Monimia! you rise
 Thus early, sure, to outshine the day:
 Or was there any thing that cross'd your rest?
 They were naughty thoughts that would not let you
 sleep.

Mon. Whatever are my thoughts, my lord, I've learnt
 By

48 T H E O R P H A N .

By your example to correct their ills,
And morn and evening give up the account.

Acast. Your pardon, sweet one, I upbraid you not;
Or if I would, you are so good, I could not.

‘ Though I’m deceiv’d, or you’re more fair to-day;
‘ For beauty’s heightened in your cheeks, and all
‘ Your charms seem up, and ready in your eyes.

‘ *Mon.* The little share I have’s so very mean,
‘ That it may easily admit addition;
‘ Though you, my lord, should most of all beware
‘ To give it too much praise, and make me proud.

‘ *Acast.* Proud of an old man’s praises; no, Monimia!
‘ But if my prayers can work thee any good,
‘ Thou shalt not want the largest share of ’em.

Heard you no noise to-night?

Mon. Noise! my good lord!

Acast. About midnight.

Mon. Indeed, my lord, I don’t remember any.

Acast. You must sure! went you early to your rest?

Mon. About the wonted hour. Why this enquiry?

[*Aside.*

Acast. And went your maid to bed too!

Mon. My lord, I guess so;

I’ve seldom known her disobey my orders.

Acast. Sure, goblins then, or fairies haunt the dwelling;
I’ll have enquiry made through all the house,
But I’ll find out the cause of these disorders.
Good day to thee, Monimia—I’ll to chapel.

[*Exit Acast.*

Mon. I’ll but dispatch some orders to my woman,

Enter Florella.

And wait upon your lordship there.

I fear the priest has play’d us false; if so,

My poor Castalio loses all for me;

I wonder though he made such haste to leave me;

Was’t not unkind, Florella? Surely ’twas!

He scarce afforded one kind parting word,

But went away so cold; the kifs he gave me,

Seem’d the forc’d compliment of sated love.

Would I had never marry’d!

Maid. Why?

Mon. Methinks

The scene's quite alter'd; I am not the same;
 I've bound up for myself a weight of cares,
 And how the burden will be borne, none knows.
 A husband may be jealous, rigid, false!
 And should Castalio e'er prove so to me,
 So tender is my heart, so nice my love,
 'Twould ruin and distract my rest for ever.

Maid. Madam, he's coming.

Mon. Where, Florella? where?

Is he returning? To my chamber lead;
 I'll meet him there, the mysteries of our love
 Should be kept private as religious rites,
 From the unhallow'd view of common eyes.

[*Exit Mon. and maid.*]

SCENE, a chamber.

Enter Castalio.

Cast. With'd morning's come! And now upon the
 plains

And distant mountains, where they feed their flocks,
 The happy shepherds leave their homely huts,
 And with their pipes proclaim the new-born day.

' The lusty swain comes with his well-fill'd scrip
 ' Of healthful viands, which, when hunger calls,
 ' With much content and appetite he eats,
 ' To follow in the fields his daily toil,
 ' And dress the grateful glebe, that yields him fruits.
 ' The beasts that under the warm hedges slept,
 ' And weather'd out the cold bleak night, are up,
 ' And looking tow'ards the neighb'ring pastures, raise
 ' Their voice, and bid their fellow brutes good morn;
 The chearful birds too, on the tops of trees,
 Assemble all in choirs, and with their notes
 Salute and welcome up the rising sun.
 There's no condition sure so curs'd as mine,
 I'm marry'd! 'Sdeath! I'm sped. How like a dog
 Look'd Hercules, thus to a distaff chain'd!
 Monimia! Oh, Monimia!

Enter Monimia and maid.

Mon. I come.

I fly to my ador'd Castalio's arms,
 My wishes' lord. May ev'ry morn begin

E

Like

50 T H E O R P H A N .

Like this; and with our days our loves renew.

Now I may hope y'are satisfy'd——

[Looking languishing on him.]

Cast. I am

Well satisfy'd, that thou art——Oh——

Mon. What? speak:

Art thou not well, Castalio? Come, lean
Upon my breast, and tell me where's thy pain.

Cast. 'Tis here; 'tis in my head; 'tis in my heart;
'Tis every where: it rages like a madness;
And I most wonder how my reason holds.

'Nay, wonder not, Monimia: the slave
'You thought you had secur'd within my breast,
'Is grown a rebel, and has broke his chain,
'And now he walks there like a lord at large.

'*Mon.* Am I not then your wife, your lov'd Monimia?
'I once was so, or I've most strangely dream'd.
'What ails my love?

'*Cast.* Whate'er thy dreams have been,
'Thy waking thoughts ne'er meant Castalio well.'
No more, Monimia, of your sex's arts,
'They're uselefs all. I'm not that pliant tool,
That necessary utensil you'd make me;
I know my charter better——I am man,
Obstinate man; and will not be enslav'd.

Mon. You shall not fear't: indeed my nature's easy;
I'll ever live your most obedient wife!
Nor ever any privilege pretend
Beyond your will: for that shall be my law:
Indeed I will not.

Cast. Nay, you shall not, Madam;
By yon bright heav'n, you shall not. All the day
I'll play the tyrant, and at night forsake thee;
Till by afflictions, and continu'd cares,
I have worn thee to a homely household drudge.
Nay, if I've any too, thou shalt be made
Subservient to my looser pleasures,
For thou hast wrong'd Castalio.

Mon. No more;
Oh, kill me here, or tell me my offence,
I'll never quit you else; but on these knees,
Thus follow you all day, 'till they're worn bare,

And

And hang upon you like a drowning creature.

Castalio.——

Cast. Away ! last night, last night——

Mon. It was our wedding night.

Cast. No more ; forget it.

Mon. Why, do you then repent ?

Cast. I do.

Mon. Oh, heaven !

And will you leave me thus ? Help, help, Florella.

[He drags her to the door, breaks from her, and exit.]

Help me to hold this yet lov'd cruel man.

Oh, my heart breaks—I'm dying. Oh—'stand off ;

' I'll not indulge this woman's weakness ; still

' Chaf'd and fomented let my heart swell on,

' 'Till with its injuries it burst, and shake

' With the dire blow this prison to the earth.

' *Maid.* What sad mistake has been the cause of this ?'

Mon. Castalio ! Oh ! how often has he swore,
Nature should change, the sun and stars grow dark,
Ere he would falsify his vows to me !

Make haste, confusion, then ; sun, lose thy light,

And stars drop dead with sorrow to the earth ;

For my Castalio's false !

' *Maid.* Unhappy day !'

Mon. False as the wind, the waters, or the weather ;
Cruel as tygers o'er their trembling prey :

I feel him in my breast, he tears my heart,

And at each sigh he drinks the gushing blood ;

Must I be long in pain ? *[Sits down.]* *[Exit Florella.]*

Enter Chamont.

Cha. In tears, Monimia !

Mon. Whoe'er thou art,
Leave me alone to my belov'd despair.

Cha. Lift up thy eyes, and see who comes to cheer
thee.

Tell me the story of thy wrongs, and then
See if my soul has rest, 'till thou hast justice.

Mon. My brother !

Cha. Yes, Monimia, if thou think'st
That I deserve the name, I am thy brother.

Mon. Oh, Castalio !

Cha. Hah !

Name me that name again ! my soul's on fire
 'Till I know all. There's meaning in that name,
 I know he is thy husband : therefore trust me
 With all the following truth——

Mon. Indeed, Chamont,
 There's nothing in it but the fault of nature ;
 I'm often thus seiz'd suddenly with grief,
 I know not why.

Cha. You use me ill, Monimia ;
 And I might think, with justice, most severely
 Of this unfaithful dealing with your brother.

Mon. Truly, I'm not to blame. Suppose I'm fond,
 And grieve for what as much may please another ?
 Should I upbraid the dearest friend on earth
 For the first fault ? You would not do so ; would you ?

Cha. Not, if I'd cause to think it was a friend.

Mon. Why do you then call this unfaithful dealing !
 I ne'er conceal'd my soul from you before :
 Bear with me now, and search my wounds no farther ;
 For every probing pains me to the heart.

Cha. 'Tis sign there's danger in't, and must be probed.
 Where's your new husband ? Still that thought disturbs
 you ?

What ! only answer me with tears ? Castalio !

Nay, now they stream ;

Cruel, unkind Castalio ! Is't not so ?

Mon. I cannot speak ; ' grief flows so fast upon me,
 ' It choaks, and will not let me tell the cause.'

Oh !

Cha. My Monimia, to my soul thou'rt dear
 As honour to my name. Dear as the light
 ' To eyes but just restor'd, and heal'd of blindness.'
 Why wilt thou not repose within my breast
 The anguish that torments thee ?

Mon. Oh ! I dare not.

Cha. I have no friend but thee. We must confide
 In one another. Two unhappy orphans,
 Alas, we are, and when I see thee grieve,
 Methinks, it is a part of me that suffers.

Mon. Oh, shouldst thou know the cause of my la-
 menting,
 ' Thou wouldst despise the abject, lost Monimia,
 ' I am

' I am satisfy'd, Chamont, that thou wouldst scorn me ;
 ' No more wouldst praise this hated beauty : but
 ' When in some cell distracted, as I shall be,
 ' Thou seest me lie ; these unregarded locks
 ' Matted like furies tresses ; my poor limbs
 ' Chain'd to the ground, and, 'stead of the delights
 ' Which happy lovers taste, my keeper's stripes,
 ' A bed of straw, and a coarse wooden dish
 ' Of wretched sustenance ; when thus thou seest me,
 ' Pr'ythee have charity and pity for me ;
 ' Let me enjoy this thought.

' *Cha.* Why wilt thou rack
 ' My soul so long, Monimia ? Ease me quickly ;
 ' Or thou wilt run me into madness first.

Mon. Could you be secret ?

Cha. Secret as the grave.

Mon. But when I've told you, will you keep your fury
 Within its bonds ? Will you not do some rash
 And horrid mischief ? For indeed, Chamont,
 You would not think how hardly I've been us'd
 From a near friend ; from one that has my soul
 A slave, and therefore treats it like a tyrant.

Cha. I will be calm ; but has Castalio wrong'd thee ?
 Has he already wasted all his love ?
 What has he done ? Quickly, for I'm all trembling
 With expectation of a horrid tale.

Mon. Oh ! could you think it !

Cha. What ?

Mon. I fear he'll kill me.

Cha. Hah !

Mon. Indeed I do ; he's strangely cruel to me ;
 Which if it last, I'm sure must break my heart.

Cha. What has he done ?

Mon. Most barbarously us'd me.
 Nothing so kind as he when in my arms !
 ' In thousand kisses, tender sighs and joys,
 ' Not to be thought again, the night was wasted ;
 At dawn of day he rose, and left his conquest.
 But when we met, and I with open arms,
 Ran to embrace the lord of all my wishes,
 Oh, then !

Cha. Go on !

Mon. He threw me from his breast,
Like a detested fin.

Cha. How !

Mon. As I hung too
Upon his knees, and begg'd to know the cause,
He dragg'd me like a slave upon the earth,
And had no pity on my cries.

Cha. How ! did he
Dash thee disdainfully away ; with scorn ?

Mon. He did ! and more, I fear, will ne'er be friends,
Though I still love him with unbated passion.

Cha. What, throw thee from him !

Mon. Yes, indeed he did.

Cha. So may this arm
Throw him to th' earth, like a dead dog despis'd.
Lameness and leprosy, blindness and lunacy,
Poverty, shame, pride, and the name of villain,
Light on me, if, Castalio, I forgive thee.

Mon. Nay, now, Chamont, art thou unkind as he is !
Didst thou not promise me thou wouldst be calm ?
Keep my disgrace conceal'd ? Why shouldst thou kill
him ?

By all my love, this arm should do him vengeance.
Alas ! I love him still ; and though I ne'er
Clasp him again within these longing arms,
Yet bless him, bless him, gods ! where'er he goes.

Enter Acasto.

Acast. Sure some ill fate is tow'rd's me ; in my house
I only meet with oddness and disorder ;
' Each vassal has a wild distracted face,
' And looks as full of business as a blockhead
' In times of danger.' Just this very moment
I met Castalio too——

Cha. Then you met a villain.

Acast. Hah !

Cha. Yes, a villain.

Acast. Have a care, young soldier,
How thou'rt too busy with Acasto's fame.
I have a sword, my arm's good old acquaintance,
Villain to thee.

Cha. Curse on thy scandalous age,

Which hinders me to rush upon thy throat,
And tear the root up of that curfed bramble !

Acast. Ungrateful ruffian ! sure my good old friend
Was ne'er thy father ; nothing of him's in thee ;
What have I done in my unhappy age,
To be thus us'd ? I scorn t' upbraid thee, boy.
But I could put thee in remembrance——

Cha. Do.

Acast. I scorn it——

Cha. No, I'll calmly hear the story,
For I would fain know all, to see which scale
Weighs most——Hah ! is not that good old *Acasto* ?
What have I done ? Can you forgive this folly ?

Acast. Why dost thou ask it ?

Cha. 'Twas the rude o'erflowing
Of too much passion. Pray, my lord, forgive me.

[*Kneels.*

Acast. Mock me not, youth : I can revenge a wrong.

Cha. I know it well ; but for this thought of mine
Pity a mad man's frenzy, and forget it.

Acast. I will ; but henceforth pry thee be more kind.

[*Raises him.*

Whence came the cause ?

Cha. Indeed I've been to blame ;

' But I'll learn better ;' for you've been my father.
You've been her father too—— [*Takes Mon. by the hand.*

Acast. Forbear the prologue——
And let me know the substance of thy tale.

Cham. You took her up, a little tender flower,
Just sprouted on a bank, which the next frost
Had nipp'd ; and with a careful loving hand,
Transplanted her into your own fair garden,
Where the sun always shines. There long she flourish'd,
Grew sweet to sense, and lovely to the eye,
Till at the last a cruel spoiler came,
Cropt this fair rose, and rifled all its sweetness,
Then cast it like a loathsome weed away.

Acast. You talk to me in parables, *Chamont*,
You may have known that I'm no wordy man ;
Fine speeches are the instruments of knaves,
Or fools, that use 'em when they want good sense ;

But

But honesty

Needs no disguise nor ornament. Be plain.

Cham. Your son——

Acast. I've two; and both, I hope, have honour.

Cha. I hope so too——but——

Acast. Speak.

Cha. I must inform you,

Once more, Castalio!

Acast. Still Castalio!

Cha. Yes.

Your son Castalio has wrong'd Monimia.

Acast. Hah! wrong'd her?

Cha. Marry'd her.

Acast. I'm sorry for't.

Cha. Why sorry?

By yon blest heav'n, there's not a lord

But might be proud to take her to his heart.

Acast. I'll not deny't.

Cha. You dare not, by the gods

You dare not; all your family combin'd:

In one damn'd falshood to outdo Castalio,

Dare not deny't.

Acast. How has Castalio wrong'd her?

Cha. Ask that of him. I say, my sister's wrong'd::
Monimia, my sister, born as high

And noble as Castalio——Do her justice,

Or, by the gods, I'll lay a scene of blood

Shall make this dwelling horrible to nature.

I'll do't. Hark you, my lord, your son Castalio,

Take him to your closet, and there teach him manners..

Acast. You shall have justice.

Cham. Nay, I will have justice.

Who'll sleep in safety that has done me wrong?

My lord, I'll not disturb you to repeat

The cause of this; I beg you (to preserve

Your house's honour) ask it of Castalio.

Acast. I will.

Cha. 'Till then, farewell——

[Exit.

Acast. Farewel, proud boy.

Monimia!

Mon. My lord.

Acast. You are my daughter.

Mon.

Mon. I am, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe to own me.

Acast. When you'll complain to me, I'll prove a father.
[Exit.]

Mon. Now I'm undone for ever. Who on earth
Is there so wretched as Monimia?
First by Castalio cruelly forsaken;
I've lost Acasto now: his parting frowns
May well instruct me, rage is in his heart:
'I shall be next abandon'd to my fortune,
'Thrust out a naked wand'rer to the world,
'And branded for the mischievous Monimia!
'What will become of me?' My cruel brother
Is framing mischiefs too, for ought I know,
That may produce bloodshed and horrid murder.
I would not be the cause of one man's death
To reign the empress of the earth; nay, more,
I'd rather lose for ever my Castalio,
My dear unkind Castalio!

Enter Polydore.

Pol. Monimia weeping!

'So morning dews on new-blown roses lodge,
'By the sun's am'rous heat to be exhal'd.'
I come, my love, to kiss all sorrow from thee,
What mean these sighs? And why thus beats thy heart?

Mon. Let me alone to sorrow. 'Tis a cause
None e'er shall know: but it shall with me die.

Pol. Happy, Monimia, he to whom these sighs,
These tears, and all these languishings, are paid!
I am no stranger to your dearest secret:
I know your heart was never meant for me,
That jewel's for an elder brother's price.

Mon. My lord!

Pol. Nay, wonder not; last night I heard
His oaths, your vows, and to my torment saw
Your wild embraces: heard the appointment made,
I did, Monimia, and I curs'd the found.
Wilt thou be sworn, my love? wilt thou be ne'er
Unkind again?

Mon. Banish such fruitless hopes!
Have you swore constancy to my undoing?
Will you be ne'er my friend again?

Pol. What means my love?

Mon.

Mon. Away ; what meant, my lord,
Last night ?

Pol. Is that a question now to be demanded ?
I hope Monimia was not much displeas'd.

Mon. Was it well done to treat me like a prostitute ?
T' assault my lodging at the dead of night,
And threaten me if I deny'd admittance——
You said you were Castalio——

Pol. By those eyes
It was the same : I spent my time much better ;
I tell thee ; ill natured fair-one, I was posted
To more advantage, on a pleasant hill
Of springing joy, and everlasting sweetness.

Mon. Hah—have a care——

Pol. Where is the danger near me ?

Mon. I fear you're on a rock will wreck your quiet,
And drown your soul in wretchedness for ever ;
A thousand horrid thoughts crowd on my memory.
Will you be kind, and answer me one question ?

Pol. I'd trust thee with my life ; on those soft breasts
Breathe out the choicest secrets of my heart,
Till I had nothing in it left but love.

Mon. Nay, I'll conjure you by the gods and angels,
By th' honour of your name, that's most concern'd,
To tell me, Polydore, and tell me truly,
Where did you rest last night ?

Pol. Within thy arms
I triumph'd : rest had been my foe.

Mon. 'Tis done——

[*She faints.*]

Pol. She faints ! No help ! Who waits ? A curse
Upon my vanity, that could not keep
The secret of my happiness in silence.
Confusion ! we shall be surpriz'd anon,
And consequently all must be betray'd.
Monimia ! She breathes—Monimia——

Mon. Well——

Let mischiefs multiply ! Let ev'ry hour
Of my loath'd life yield me increase of horror !
Oh, let the sun to these unhappy eyes
Ne'er shine again, but be eclips'd for ever ;
May every thing I look on seem a prodigy,
To fill my soul with terrors, till I quite

Forget

Forget I ever had humanity,
And grow a curser of the works of nature !

Pol. What means all this ?

Mon. Oh, Polydore, if all
The friendship e'er you vow'd to good Castalio
Be not a falshood ; if you ever lov'd
Your brother, you've undone yourself and me.

Pol. Which way can ruin reach the man that's rich,
As I am, in possession of thy sweetness ?

Mon. Oh ! I'm his wife.

Pol. What says Monimia ! hah !

' Speak that again.'

Mon. I am Castalio's wife.

Pol. His marry'd, wedded wife ?

Mon. Yesterday's fun
Saw it perform'd.

Pol. And then, have I enjoy'd
My brother's wife ?

Mon. As surely as we both
Must taste of misery, that guilt is thine.

' *Pol.* Must we be miserable then ?

' *Mon.* Oh !'

Pol. Oh ! thou may'st yet be happy.

Mon. Couldst thou be
Happy, with such a weight upon thy soul ?

Pol. It may be yet a secret ; I'll go try
To reconcile and bring Castalio to thee ;
Whilst from the world I take myself away,
And waste my life in penance for my sin.

Mon. Then thou wouldst more undo me ; heap a load
Of added sins upon my wretched head.

Wouldst thou again have me betray thy brother,
And bring pollution to his arms ? Curst thought !

Oh, when shall I be mad indeed ! [*Ex. Mon.*]

' *Pol.* Nay, then

' Let us embrace, and from this very moment

' Vow an eternal misery together.

' *Mon.* And wilt thou be a very faithful wretch ?

' Never grow fond of chearful peace again ?

' Wilt thou with me study to be unhappy,

' And find out ways how to increase affliction ?

' *Pol.* We'll institute new arts unknown before,

' To vary plagues, and make 'em look like new ones.

' First

60 T H E O R P H A N .

‘ First, if the fruit of our detested joy
 ‘ A child be born, it shall be murder’d——

‘ *Mon.* No ;

‘ Sure that may live.

‘ *Pol.* Why ?

‘ *Mon.* To become a thing.

‘ More wretched than its parents to be branded

‘ With all our infamy, and curse its birth.’

Pol. ‘ That’s well contriv’d.’

Then thus I’ll go,

Full of my guilt, distracted where to roam,

‘ Like the first wretched pair expell’d their Paradise.’

I’ll find some place where adders nest in winter,

Loathsome and venomous : where poisons hang

Like gums against the walls : where witches meet

By night, and feed upon some pamper’d imp,

Fat with the blood of babes : There I’ll inhabit,

And live up to the height of desperation ;

Desire shall languish like a withering flow’r,

‘ And no distinction of the sex be thought of.’

Horrors shall fright me from those pleasing harms,

And I’ll no more be caught with beauty’s charms,

‘ But when I’m dying take me in thy arms.’ [*Exit.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V .

SCENE, *a garden.*

Castañio lying on the ground. Soft music.

‘ S O N G .

‘ I .

‘ **C**OME, all ye youths, whose hearts e’er bled

‘ By cruel beauty’s pride ;

‘ Bring each a garland on his head,

‘ Let none his sorrows hide :

‘ But hand in hand around me move,

‘ Singing the saddest tales of love ;

‘ And see, when your complaints ye join,

‘ If all your wrongs can equal mine.

‘ The

II.

- ' The happiest mortal once was I ;
- ' My heart no sorrows knew,
- ' Pity the pain with which I die ;
- ' But ask not whence it grew.
- ' Yet if a tempting fair you find,
- ' That's very lovely, very kind,
- ' Though bright as Heav'n, whose stamp she bears,
- ' Think of my fate, and shun her snares.'

See where the deer trot after one another,
 Male, female, father, daughter, mother, son,
 Brother and sister, mingled all together.
 No discontent they know ; but in delightful
 Wildness and freedom, pleasant springs, fresh herbage,
 Calm harbours, lussy health and innocence,
 Enjoy their portion ; if they see a man,
 How will they turn together all, and gaze
 Upon the monster——
 Once in a season too they taste of love:
 Only the beast of reason is its slave,
 And in that folly drudges all the year.

Enter Acasto.

Acast. Castalio ! Castalio !

Cast. Who's there

So wretched but to name Castalio ?

Acast. I hope my message may succeed !

Cast. My father !

'Tis joy to see you, tho' where sorrow's nourish'd. [*rest.*

' *Acast.* I'm come in beauty's cause ; you'll guess the

' *Cast.* A woman ! If you love my peace of mind,

' Name not a woman to me ; but to think

' Of woman, were enough to taint my brains,

' 'Till they ferment to madness. Oh, my father !

' *Acast.* What ails my boy ?

' *Cast.* A woman is the thing

' I would forget, and blot from my remembrance.

' *Acast.* Forget Monimia !

' *Cast.* She, to choose : Monimia !

' The very sound's ungrateful to my sense.

' *Acast.* This might seem strange, but you, I've found,
 will hide

' Your heart from me ; you dare not trust your father.

F

' *Cast.*

Cast. No more Monimia.

Acast. Is she not your wife ?

Cast. So much the worse ; who loves to hear of wife ?

Cast. When you would give all worldly plagues a name,

Cast. Worse than they have already, call 'em wife :

Cast. But a new-marry'd wife's a teeming mischief,

Cast. Full of herself ! Why, what a deal of horror

Cast. Has that poor wretch to come, that wedded yesterday !

Acast. Castalio, you must go along with me,
And see Monimia.

Cast. Sure my lord but mocks me.

Go see Monimia ! *Cast.* Pray, my lord, excuse me,

Cast. And leave the conduct of this part of life

Cast. To my own choice.

Acast. I say, no more dispute.

Complaints are made to me, that you have wrong'd her.

Cast. Who has complain'd ?

Acast. Her brother, to my face, proclaim'd her wrong'd,
And in such terms they've warm'd me.

Cast. What terms ? Her brother ! Heav'n !

Where learn'd she that ?

What ! does she send her here with defiance ?

He durst not sure affront you !

Acast. No, not much.

But—

Cast. Speak, what said he ?

Acast. That thou wert a villain ;

Methinks I would not have thee thought a villain.

Cast. Shame on th' ill-manner'd brute !

Your age secur'd him ; he durst not else have said so.

Acast. By my sword,

I would not see thee wrong'd, and bear it vilely :

Though I have pass'd my word she shall have justice.

Cast. Justice ! to give her justice would undo her.

Think you this solitude I now have chosen,

Left joys, just op'ning to my sense, sought here

A place to curse my fate in, measur'd out

My grave at length, wish'd to have grown one piece

With this cold clay, and all without a cause ?

Enter Chamont.

Cha. Where is the hero, famous and renown'd
For wronging innocence and breaking vows,

Whose

Whose mighty spirit, and whose stubborn heart,
No woman can appease, nor man provoke?

Acast. I guess, Chamont, you come to seek Castalio.

Cha. I come to seek the husband of Monimia.

Cast. The slave is here.

Cha. I thought e'er now to've found you
Attoning for the ills you've done Chamont;
For you have wrong'd the dearest part of him.
Monimia, young lord, weeps in this heart;
And all the tears thy injuries have drawn
From her poor eyes, are drops of blood from hence.

Cast. Then you are Chamont?

Cha. Yes, and I hope no stranger
To great Castalio.

Cast. I've heard of such a man
That has been very busy with my honour.
I own, I'm much indebted to you, Sir,
And here return the villain back again.
You sent me by my father:

Cha. Thus I'll thank you. [Draws.

Acast. By this good sword, who first presumes to violence,
Makes me his foe—— [Draws and interposes.

• Young man, it once was thought [To Cast.

• I was fit guardian of my house's honour;

• And you might trust your share with me——For you, [To Cham.

• Young soldier, I must tell you, you have wrong'd me.

• I promis'd you to do Monimia right,

• And thought my word a pledge I would not forfeit:

• But you, I find, would fright us to performance.'

Cast. Sir, in my younger years, with care you taught me
That brave revenge was due to injur'd honour;
Oppose not then the justice of my sword,
Lest you should make me jealous of your love.

Cha. Into thy father's arms thou fly'st for safety,
Because thou know'st that place is sanctify'd
With the remembrance of an ancient friendship.

Cast. I am a villain, if I will not seek thee,
Till I may be reveng'd for all the wrongs
Done me by that ungrateful fair thou plead'st for.

Cha. She wrong'd thee! by the fury in my heart,

Thy father's honour's not above Monimia's;
Nor was thy mother's truth and virtue fairer.

Acast. Boy, don't disturb the ashes of the dead
With thy capricious follies. The remembrance
Of the lov'd creature that once fill'd these arms —

Cha. Has not been wrong'd.

Cast. It shall not.

Cham. No, nor shall

Monimia, though a helpless orphan, destitute
Of friends and fortune, though th' unhappy sister
Of poor Chamont, whose sword is all his portion,
B' oppress'd by thee, thou proud imperious traitor.

Cast. Hah! set me free.

Cha. Come both.

Enter Serina.

Ser. Alas! alas!

The cause of these disorders; my Chamont,
Who is't has wrong'd thee?

Cast. Now, where art thou fled
For shelter?

Cha. Come from thine, and see what safeguard
Shall then betray my fears.

Ser. Cruel Castalio,
Sheath up thy angry sword, and don't affright me,
Chamont, let once Serina calm thy breast:
If any of my friends have done thee injuries,
I'll be reveng'd, and love thee better for't.

Cast. Sir, if you'd have me think you did not take
This opportunity to shew your vanity,
Let's meet some other time, when by ourselves
We fairly may dispute our wrongs together.

Cha. Till then, I am Castalio's friend.

Cast. Serina,
Farewel, I wish much happiness attend you.

Ser. Chamont's the dearest thing I have on earth;
Give me Chamont, and let the world forsake me.

Cha. Witness the gods, how happy I'm in thee!
' No beauteous blossom of the fragrant spring,
' Though the fair child of nature newly born,
' Can be so lovely.' Angry, unkind Castalio,
Suppose I should a-while lay by my passions,

And

And be a beggar in Monimia's cause,
Might I be heard?

Cast. Sir, 'twas my last request,
You would, though I find you will not, be satisfy'd;
So, in a word, Monimia is my scorn;
She basely sent you here to try my fears;
That was your business;

• No artful prostitute, in falsehoods practis'd,
• To make advantage of her coxcomb's follies,
• Could have done more.—Disquiet vex her for't.

Cba. Farewel. [Exit Cham. and Ser.

Cast. Farewel—My father, you seem troubled.

Acast. Would I'd been absent when this boisterous
brave

Came to disturb thee thus. I'm griev'd I hinder'd
Thy just resentment——But Monimia——

Cast. Damn her.

Acast. Don't curse her.

Cast. Did I?

Acast. Yes.

Cast. I'm sorry for't.

Acast. Methinks, as if I guess, the fault's but small,
It might be pardon'd.

Cast. No.

Acast. What has she done?

Cast. That she's my wife, may heaven and you for-
give me.

Acast. Be reconcil'd then.

Cast. No.

Acast. Go see her.

Cast. No.

Acast. I'll send and bring her hither.

Cast. No.

Acast. For my sake,

Castalio; and the quiet of my age.

Cast. Why will you urge a thing my nature starts at?

Acast. Pr'ythee forgive her.

Cast. Lightnings first shall blast me.

Tell you, were she prostrate at my feet,

Full of her sex's best dissembled sorrows,

And all that wond'rous beauty of her own,

My heart might break, but it should never soften.

Enter Florella.

Flor. My lord, where are you? 'Oh, Castalio!

' *Acast.* Hark.

' *Cast.* What's that?

Flor. Oh, shew me quickly, where's Castalio?

Acast. Why, what's the business?

Flor. Oh, the poor Monimia!—

Cast. Hah!

Acast. What's the matter?

Flor. Hurry'd by despair,

She flies with fury over all the house.

Through every room of each apartment, crying,

Where's my Castalio? Give me my Castalio!

Except she sees you, sure she'll grow distracted.

Cast. Hah! will she? Does she name Castalio?

And with such tenderness? Conduct me quickly

To the poor lovely mourner. 'Oh, my father!

Acast. Then wilt thou go? Blessings attend thy purpose.

Cast. I cannot hear Monimia's soul's in sadness,

And be a man; my heart will not forget her;

'But do not tell the world you saw this of me.'

Acast. Delay not then, but haste and cheer thy love.

Cast. Oh! I will throw m'impatient arms about her,

In her soft bosom sigh my soul to peace,

Till through the panting breast she finds the way.

To mould my heart, and make it what she will.

Monimia! Oh!

[*Exeunt Acasto and Cast.*

SCENE, a chamber.

Enter Monimia.

Mon. Stand off, and give me room,

I will not rest till I have found Castalio,

My wish's lord, comely as the rising day,

Amidst ten thousand eminently known.

Flowers spring up where'er he treads, his eyes,

Fountains of brightness, cheering all about him!

When will they shine on me?—Oh, stay my soul!

I cannot die in peace till I have seen him.

Castalio within.

Cast. Who talks of dying with a voice so sweet,

That life's in love with it?

Mon. Hark! 'tis he that answers.

'So

‘ So, in a camp, tho’ at the dead of night,
 ‘ If but the trumpet’s chearful noise is heard,
 ‘ All at the signal leap from downy rest,
 ‘ And every heart awakes, as mine does now.’

Where art thou?

Cast. [*Entering.*] Here, my love.

Mon. No, nearer, lest I vanish.

Cast. Have I been in a dream, then, all this while?
 And art thou but the shadow of Monimia?

Why dost thou fly me thus?

Mon. Oh, were it possible that we could drown
 In dark oblivion but a few past hours,
 We might be happy.

Cast. Is’t then so hard, Monimia, to forgive
 A fault, where humble love, like mine, implores thee?
 For I must love thee, though it prove my ruin.
 Which way shall I court thee?

What shall I do to be enough thy slave,
 And satisfy the lovely pride that’s in thee?
 I’ll kneel to thee, and weep a flood before thee.

Yet pry’thee, tyrant, break not quite my heart;
 But when my task of penitence is done,
 Heal it again, and comfort me with love.

Mon. If I am dumb, Castalio, and want words
 To pay thee back this mighty tenderness;
 It is because I look on thee with horror,
 And cannot see the man I have so wrong’d.

Cast. Thou hast not wrong’d me.

Mon. Ah! alas, thou talk’st

Just as thy poor heart thinks! Have not I wrong’d thee?

Cast. No.

Mon. Still thou wander’st in the dark, Castalio;
 But wilt, ere long, stumble on horrid danger.

‘ *Cast.* What means my love?

‘ *Mon.* Could’st thou but forgive me——

‘ *Cast.* What?

‘ *Mon.* For my fault last night: alas, thou can’st not!

‘ *Cast.* I can, and do.

‘ *Mon.* Thus crawling on the earth,
 ‘ Would I that pardon meet; the only thing
 ‘ Can make me view the face of Heav’n with hope.

‘ *Cast.* Then, let’s draw near.

‘ *Mon.*

Mon. Ah, me !

Cast. So, in the fields,

- When the destroyer has been out for prey,
- The scatter'd lovers of the feather'd kind,
- Seeking, when danger's past, to meet again,
- Make moan, and cail, by such degrees approach ;
- 'Till joining thus, they bill, and spread their wings,
- Murmuring love, and joy their fears are over.

- *Mon.* Yet, have a care ; be not too fond of peace,
- Lest, in pursuance of the goodly quarry,
- Thou meet a disappointment that distracts thee.'

Cast. My better angel, then do thou inform me,
What danger threatens me, and where it lies :
Why didst thou (pr'ythee smile, and tell me why)
When I stood waiting underneath the window,
Quaking with fierce and violent desires ;
The dropping dews fell cold upon my head,
Darkness inclos'd, and the winds whistled round me ;
Which, with my mournful sighs, made such sad music,
As might have mov'd the hardest heart ; why wert thou
Deaf to my cries, and senseless of my pains ?

Mon. Did I not beg thee to forbear enquiry ?
Read'st thou not something in my face, that speaks
Wonderful change, and horror from within me ?

Cast. Then there is something yet which I've not
known :

What dost thou mean by horror and forbearance
Of more enquiry ? Tell me, I beg thee, tell me ;
And don't betray me to a second madness.

Mon. Must I ?

Cast. If, lab'ring in the pangs of death,
Thou wouldst do any thing to give me ease ;
Unfold this riddle ere my thoughts grow wild ;
And let in fears of ugly form upon me.

Mon. My heart won't let me speak it ; but remember,
Monimia, poor Monimia, tells you this,
We ne'er must meet again.——

Cast. ' What means my destiny ?

• For all my good or evil fate dwells in thee ?'
Ne'er meet again !

Mon. No, never.

Cast. Where's the power

On earth, that dare not look like thee, and say so ?
Thou art my heart's inheritance ; I serv'd
A long and painful, faithful slav'ry for thee :
And who shall rob me of the dear-bought blessing ?

Mon. Time will clear all ; but now let this content you.
Heav'n has decreed, and therefore I'm resolv'd
(With torment I must tell it thee, Castalio)
Ever to be a stranger to thy love ;
In some far distant country waste my life,
And from this day, to see thy face no more.

Cast. Where am I ? Sure I wander 'midst enchantment,
And never more shall find the way to rest ;
' But Oh, Monimia ! art thou indeed resolv'd
' To punish me with everlasting absence ?'
Why turn'st thou from me ; I'm alone already ;
Methinks I stand upon a naked beach,
Sighing to winds, and to the seas complaining,
Whilst afar off the vessel sails away,
Where all the treasure of my soul's embark'd,
Wilt thou not turn ?—Oh ! could those eyes but speak,
I should know all, for love is pregnant in 'em ;
They swell, they press their beams upon me still :
Wilt thou not speak ? If we must part for ever,
Give me but one kind word to think upon,
And please myself withal, whilst my heart's breaking.

Mon. Ah, poor Castalio ! [Exit Monimia.]

Cast. ' Pity, by the gods,
' She pities me ! then thou wilt go eternally.'
What means all this ? Why all this stir to plague
A single wretch ? If but your word can shake
This world to atoms, why so much ado
With me ? Think me but dead, and lay me so.

Enter Polydore.

Pol. To live, and live a torment to myself,
What dog would bear't, that knew but his condition ?
We've little knowledge, and that makes us cowards,
Because it cannot tell us what's to come.

Cast. Who's there ?——

Pol. Why, what art thou ?

Cast. My brother Polydore ?

Pol. My name is Polydore.

Cast. Canst thou inform me——

Pol.

Pol. Of what !

Cast. Of my Monimia ?

Pol. No. Good day.

Cast. In haste.

• Methinks my Polydore appears in sadness.

Pol. Indeed, and so to me does my Castalio.

Cast. Do I ?

Pol. Thou dost.

Cast. Alas, I've wond'rous reason !

I'm strangely alter'd, brother, since I saw thee.

Pol. Why ?

Cast. Oh ! to tell thee, would but put thy heart
To pain. Let me embrace thee but a little,
And weep upon thy neck ; I would repose
Within thy friendly bosom all my follies ;
For thou wilt pardon 'em, because they're mine.

Pol. Be not too credulous ; consider first ;
Friends may be false. Is there no friendship false ?

Cast. Why dost thou ask me that ? Does this appear
Like a false friendship, when with open arms
And streaming eyes, I run upon thy breast ?
Oh, 'tis in thee alone I must have comfort !

Pol. I fear, Castalio, I have none to give thee.

Cast. Dost thou not love me, then ?

Pol. Oh, more than life :

• I never had a thought of my Castalio,
Might wrong the friendship we had vow'd together.
Hast thou dealt so by me ?

Cast. I hope I have.

Pol. Then tell me why this mourning, this disorder ?

Cast. Oh, Polydore, I know not how to tell thee ;
Shame rises in my face, and interrupts
The story of my tongue.

Pol. I grieve, my friend
Knows any thing which he's ashamed to tell me ;
Or didst thou e'er conceal thy thoughts from Polydore ?

Cast. Oh, much too oft !
But let me here conjure thee,
By all the kind affection of a brother,
(For I'm ashamed to call myself thy friend)
Forgive me. ———

Pol. Well, go on.

Cast.

Cast. Our destiny contriv'd
To plague us both with one unhappy love.
Thou, like a friend, a constant, gen'rous friend,
In its first pangs didst trust me with thy passion,
Whilst I still smooth'd my pain with smiles before thee,
And made a contract I ne'er meant to keep.

Pol. How!

Cast. Still new ways I study'd to abuse thee,
And kept thee as a stranger to my passion,
'Till yesterday I wedded with Monimia.

Pol. Ah, Castalio, was that well done?

Cast. No; to conceal't from thee was much a fault.

Pol. A fault! when thou hast heard
The tale I tell, what wilt thou call it then?

Cast. How my heart throbs!

Pol. First, for thy friendship, traitor,
I cancel't thus; after this day, I'll ne'er
Hold trust or converse with the false Castalio;
This, witness Heav'n.

Cast. What will my fate do with me?
I've lost all happiness, and know not why.
What means this, brother?

Pol. Perjur'd, treach'rous wretch,
Farewel.

Cast. I'll be thy slave, and thou shalt use me
Just as thou wilt, do but forgive me.

Pol. Never.

Cast. Oh! think a little what thy heart is doing;
How, from our infancy, we hand in hand
Have trod the path of life in love together;
One bed has held us, and the same desires,
The same aversions still employ'd our thoughts:
When e'er had I a friend, that was not Polydore's?
Or Polydore a foe that was not mine!
Ev'n in the womb w'embrac'd, and wilt thou now
For the first fault, abandon and forsake me,
Leave me; amidst afflictions, to myself,
Plung'd in the gulph of grief, and none to help me?

Pol. Go to Monimia, in her arms thou'lt find
Repose; she has the art of healing sorrows.

Cast. What arts?

Pol. Blind wretch! thou husband! there's a question!
Go

‘ Go to her fulsome bed, and wallow there ;
 ‘ Till some hot ruffian, full of lust and wine,
 ‘ Come storm thee out, and shew thee what’s thy bargain.
 ‘ *Cast.* Hold there, I charge thee.’

Pol. Is she not a——

Cast. Whore ?

Pol. Ay, whore ; I think that word needs no explaining.

Cast. Alas, I can forgive ev’n this, to thee !
 But let me tell thee, Polydore, I’m griev’d
 To find thee guilty of such low revenge,
 To wrong that virtue which thou couldst not ruin.

Pol. It seems I lie, then.

Cast. Should the bravest man
 That e’er wore conquering sword, but dare to whisper
 What thou proclaim’st, he were the worst of liars :
 My friend may be mistaken.

Pol. Damn th’ evasion ;
 Thou mean’st the worst ; and he’s a base-born villain
 That said I lied.

Cast. Do, draw thy sword, and thrust it through my
 heart ;
 There is no joy in life, if thou art lost.
 A base-born villain !

Pol. Yes ; thou never cam’st
 From old Acasto’s loins ; the midwife put
 A cheat upon my mother, and instead
 Of a true brother, in the cradle by me,
 Plac’d some coarse peasant’s cub, and thou art he.

Cast. Thou art my brother still.

Pol. Thou liest.

Cast. Nay then—— [*He draws.*
 Yet I am calm.

Pol. A coward’s always so.

Cast. Ah ! — ah — that stings home——Coward !

Pol. Ay, base-born coward ! villain !

Cast. This to thy heart, then, tho’ my mother bore thee.
 [*Fight ; Polydore drops his sword, and runs on Castalio’s.*

Pol. Now my Castalio is again my friend.

Cast. What have I done ? My sword is in thy breast.

Pol. So I would have it be, thou best of men,
 Thou kindest brother, and thou truest friend.

Cast.

Cast. Ye gods, we're taught that all your works are justice,

Ye're painted merciful, and friends to innocence :
If so, then why these plagues upon my head ?

Pol. Blame not the Heav'ns ; here lies thy fate,
Castalio ;

Th'are not the gods, 'tis Polydore has wrong'd thee ;
I've stain'd thy bed ; thy spotless marriage joys
Have been polluted by thy brother's lust.

Cast. By thee !

Pol. By me, last night, the horrid deed
Was done, when all things slept, but rage and incest.

Cast. Now where's Monimia ? Oh !

Enter Monimia.

Mon. I'm here, who calls me ?

Methought I heard a voice,
Sweet as the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains,
When all his little flock's at feed before him.
By what means this ? Here's blood.

Cast. Ay, brother's blood.

Art thou prepar'd for everlasting pains ;

Pol. Oh, let me charge thee, by th' eternal justice,
Hurt not her tender life !

Cast. Not kill her ? ' Rack me,
' Ye pow'rs above, with all your choicest torments,
' Horror of mind, and pains yet uninvented,
' If I not practise cruelty upon her,
' And wreak revenge some way yet never known.'

Mon. That task myself have finish'd, I shall die
Before we part ; I've drank a healing draught
For all my cares, and never more shall wrong thee.

Pol. Oh, she's innocent !

Cast. Tell me that story,
And thou wilt make a wretch of me indeed.

Pol. Hadst thou, Castalio, us'd me like a friend,
This ne'er had happen'd ; hadst thou let me know
Thy marriage, we had all now met in joy ;
But ignorant of that,
Hearing th' appointment made, enrag'd to think
Thou hadst outdone me in successful love,
I, in the dark, went and supply'd thy place ;
Whilst, all the night, 'midst our triumphant joys,

The trembling, tender, kind, deceiv'd Monimia,
Embrac'd, carefs'd, and call'd me her Castalio.

Cast. And all this is the work of my own fortune;
None but myself could e'er have been so curs'd.
My fatal love, alas! has ruin'd thee,
Thou fairest, goodliest frame the gods e'er made,
Or ever human eyes and hearts ador'd.
I've murder'd too my brother.

Why would'st thou study ways to damn me farther?
And force the sin of parricide upon me?

Pol. 'Twas my own fault, and thou art innocent;
Forgive the barbarous trespass of my tongue;
'Twas a hard violence: I could have died
With love of thee, e'en when I us'd thee worst;
Nay, at each word that my distraction utter'd,
My heart recoil'd, and 'twas half death to speak 'em.

Mon. Now, my Castalio, the most dear of men,
Wilt thou receive pollution to thy bosom,
And close the eyes of one that has betray'd thee?

Cast. Oh, I'm th' unhappy wretch, whose cursed fate
Has weigh'd thee down into destruction with him.
Why then, thus kind to me?

Mon. When I'm laid low i'th' grave, and quite for-
gotten,
May'st thou be happy in a fairer bride;
But none can ever love thee like Monimia.
When I am dead, as presently I shall be,
(For the grim tyrant grasps my heart already)
Speak well of me; and if thou find ill tongues
Too busy with my fame, don't hear me wrong'd;
'Twill be a noble justice to the memory
Of a poor wretch, once honour'd with thy love.
How my head swims! 'tis very dark. Good night.

[*Dies.*

Cast. If I survive thee—what a thought was that?
Thank Heav'n, I go prepar'd against that curse.

*Enter Chamont, disarmed and seized by Acasto and
servants.*

Cham. Gape earth, and swallow me to quick de-
struction,
If I forgive your house; if I not live
An everlasting plague to thee, Acasto,

And all thy race. Ye've o'erpower'd me now ;
But hear me, Heav'n !—Ah, here's a scene of death !
My sister, my Monimia breathless !—Now,
Ye pow'rs above, if ye have justice, strike,
Strike bolts thro' me, and through the curs'd Castalio.

Acast. My Polydore !

Pol. Who calls ?

Acast. How cam'st thou wounded ?

Cast. Stand off, thou hot-brain'd, boist'rous, noisy
russian,

And leave me to my sorrows.

Cham. By the love

I bore her living, I will ne'er forsake her ;
But here remain, 'till my heart burst with sobbing.

Cast. Vanish, I charge thee, or— [*Draws a dagger.*]

Cham. Thou canst not kill me ;

That would be kindness, and against thy nature.

Acast. What means Castalio ? Sure thou wilt not pull
More sorrows on thy aged father's head.

Tell me, I beg you, tell me the sad cause
Of all this ruin.

Pol. That must be my task :

But 'tis too long for one in pains to tell ;
You'll in my closet find the story written.
Of all our woes, Castalio's innocent,
And so's Monimia ; only I'm to blame.
Enquire no farther.

Cast. Thou, unkind Chamont,
Unjustly hast pursu'd me with thy hate,
And sought the life of him that never wrong'd thee :
Now, if thou wilt embrace a noble vengeance,
Come, join with me, and curse—

Cham. What ?

Cast. First, thyself,
As I do, and the hour that gave thee birth :
Confusion and disorder seize the world,
To spoil all trust and converse amongst men,
'Twixt families engender endless feuds,
In countries needless fears, in cities factions,
In states rebellion, and in churches schism :
'Till all things move against the course of nature :

76 THE ORPHAN.

'Till form's dissolv'd, the chain of causes broken,
And the original of being lost.

Acast. Have patience.

Cast. Patience ! preach it to the winds,
To roaring seas, or raging fires ! The knaves
That teach it, laugh at ye when ye believe 'em.
Strip me of all the common needs of life,
Scald me with leprosy, let friends forsake me,
I'll bear it all ; but curs'd to the degree
That I am now, 'tis this must give me patience ?
Thus I find rest, and shall complain no more.

[Stabs himself.]

' *Pol.* Castalio ! Oh !

Cast. ' I come.'

Chamont, to thee my birth-right I bequeath ;
Comfort my mourning father, heal his griefs,

[Acasto faints into the arms of a servant.]

For I perceive they fall with weight upon him.

And, for Monimia's sake, whom thou wilt find

I never wrong'd, be kind to poor Serina.

Now, all I beg, is, lay me in one grave

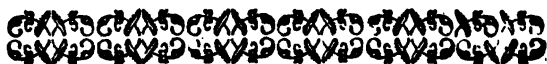
Thus with my love. Farewel. I now am—nothing.

[Dies.]

Cham. Take care of good Acasto, whilst I go
To search the means by which the fates have plagu'd us.
'Tis thus that Heav'n its empire does maintain ;
It may afflict, but man must not complain.

[Exeunt omnes.]

END of the FIFTH ACT.

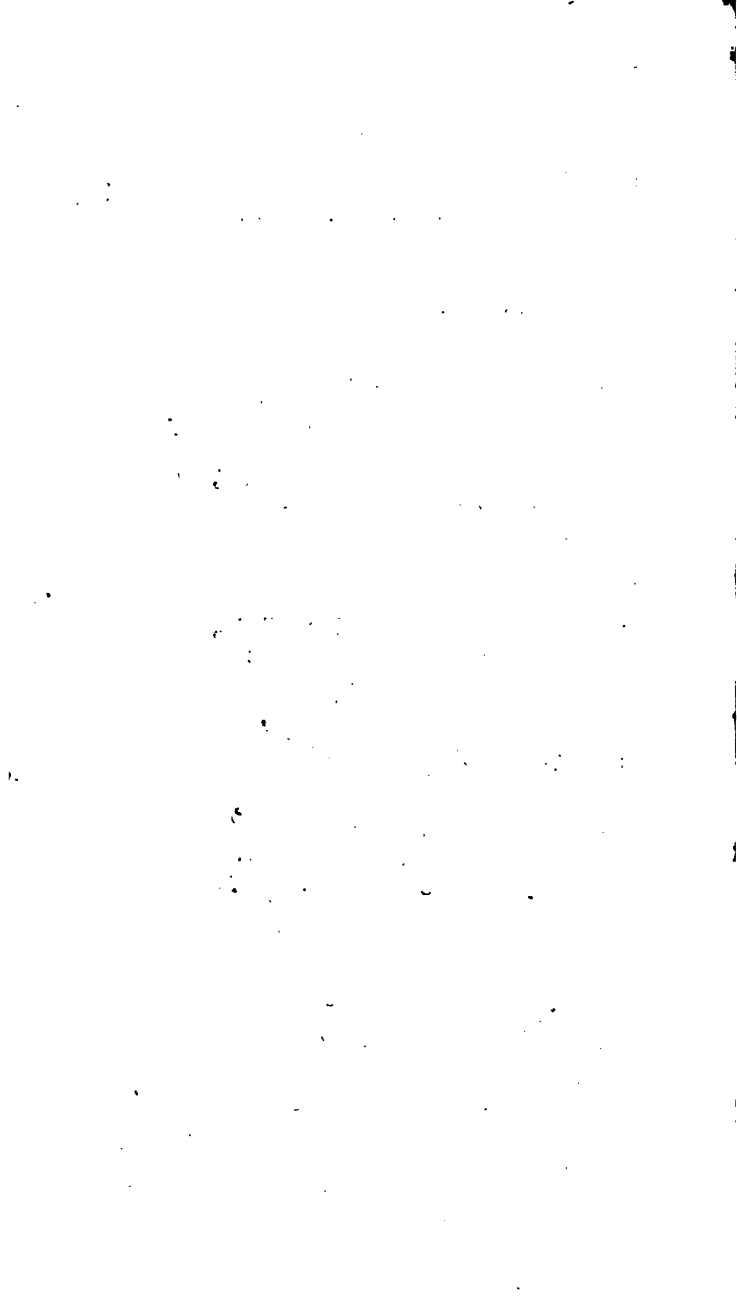


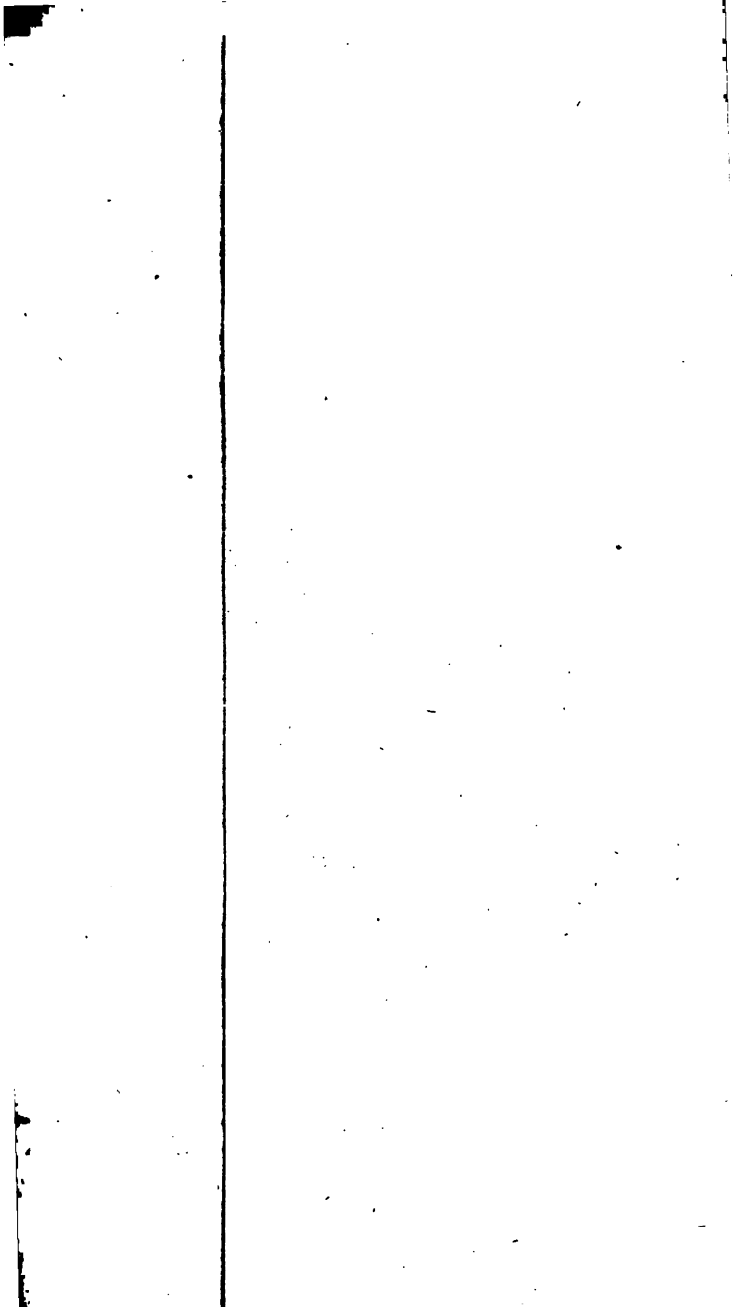
EPILOGUE.

Spoken by SERINA.

YOU'VE seen one orphan ruin'd here; and I
May be the next, if old Acasto die:
Should it prove so, I'd fain amongst you find,
Who 'tis would to the fatherless be kind.
To whose protection might I safely go?
Is there among you no good-nature? No.
What shall I do? Should I the godly seek,
And go a convicting twice a week?
Quit the lewd stage, and its prophane pollution;
Affect each form, and saint-like institution;
So draw the brethren all to contribution?
Or shall I, (as I guess the poet may
Within these three days) fairly run away?
No; to some city-lodgings I'll retire;
Seem very grave, and privacy desire;
Till I am thought some heiress, rich in lands,
Fled to escape a cruel guardian's hands:
Which may produce a story worth the telling,
Of the next sparks that go a fortune-stealing.









J. Roberts del.

Thornthwaite Sculp.

M. GARS of TANCRED and SIGISMUND.

Si Be not alarmed my Love?!

BELL'S EDITION.

Tancred and Sigismunda.

A TRAGEDY,

As written by Mr. THOMSON.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
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AS PERFORMED AT THE

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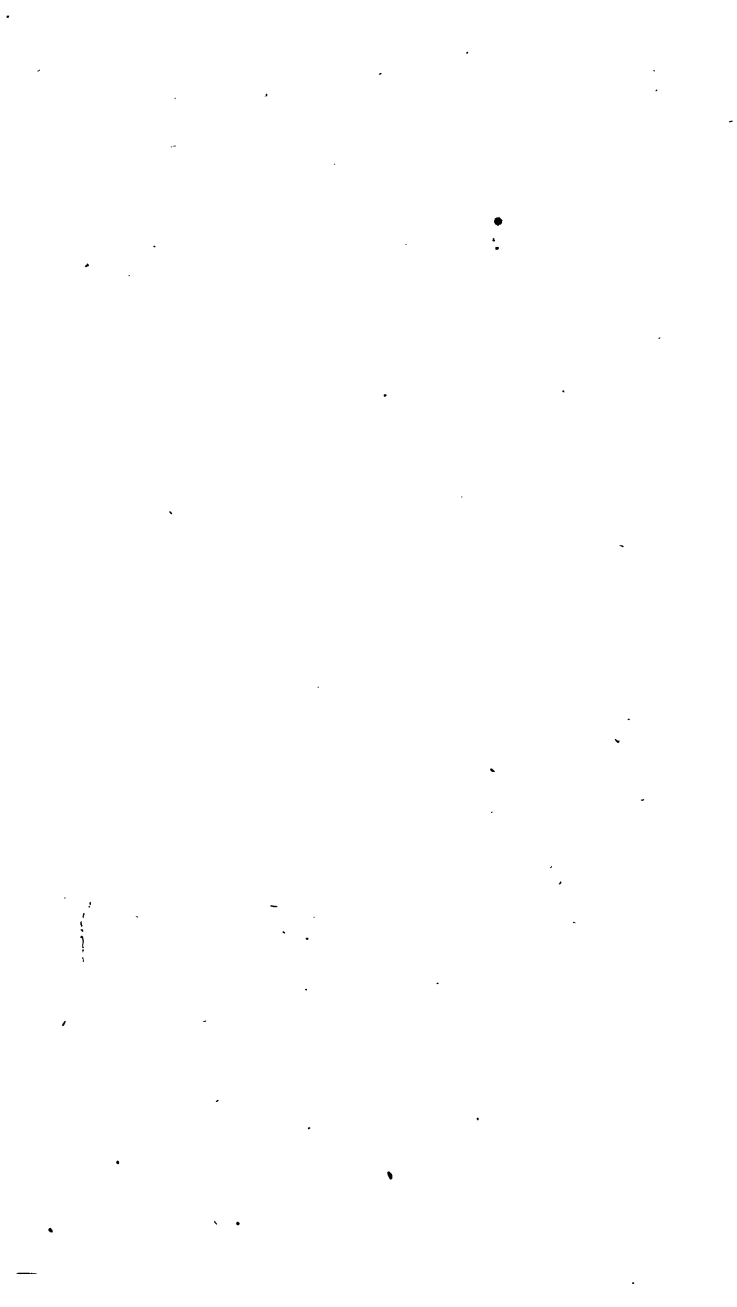
By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.



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and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCLXXVI.



TO HIS
 ROYAL HIGHNESS
 FREDERICK,
 Prince of WALES.

SIR,

THE honour your Royal Highness has done me in the protection you was pleased to give to this tragedy, emboldens me to lay it now at your feet, and beg your permission to publish it under Royal patronage. The favouring and protecting of letters has been, in all ages and countries, one distinguishing mark of a great prince; and that with good reason, not only as it shews a justness of taste, and elevation of mind, but as the influence of such a protection, by exciting good writers to labour with more emulation in the improvement of their several talents, not a little contributes to the embellishment and instruction of society. But of all the different species of writing, none has such an effect upon the lives and manners of men, as the dramatic; and therefore, that of all others most deserves the attention of princes; who, by a judicious approbation of such pieces as tend to promote all public and private virtue, may more than by any coercive methods, secure the purity of the stage, and in consequence thereof greatly advance the morals and politeness of their people. How eminently your Royal Highness has always extended your favour and

patronage to every art and science, and in a particular manner to dramatic performances, is too well known to the world for me to mention it here. Allow me only to wish, that what I have now the honour to offer to your Royal Highness, may be judged not unworthy of your protection, at least in the sentiments which it inculcates. A warm and grateful sense of your goodness to me, makes me desirous to seize every occasion of declaring in public, with what profound respect and dutiful attachment, I am,

S I R,

Your Royal Highness's

Most obliged,

Most obedient, and

Most devoted servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

P R O L O G U E.

BOLD is the man ! who, in this nicer age,
Presumes to tread the chaste corrected stage,
 Now, with gay tinsel arts, we can no more
Conceal the want of nature's sterling ore.
Our spells are vanish'd, broke our magic wand,
That us'd to waft you over sea and land.
Before your light the fairy people fade,
The demons fly—The ghost itself is laid.
In vain of martial scenes the loud alarms,
The mighty prompter thundering out to arms,
The playhouse posse clattering from afar,
The close-wedg'd battle, and the din of war.
Now, even the senate seldom we convene,
The yawning fathers nod behind the scene..
Your taste rejects the glittering false sublime,
To sigh in metaphor, and die in rhyme.
High rant is tumbled from his gallery throne :
Description, dreams—nay, similes are gone.

What shall we then ? to please you how devise,
Whose judgment fits not in your ears and eyes ?
Thrice happy ! could we catch great Shakespear's art,
To trace the deep-recesses of the heart :
His simple, plain sublime, to which is given
To strike the soul with darted flame from heaven :
Could we awake soft Otway's tender woe,
The pomp of verse and golden lines of Rowe.

We to your hearts apply : let them attend ;
Before their silent candid bar we bend.
If warm'd, they listen, 'tis our noblest praise :
If cold, they wither all the muse's bays..

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Drury-Lane.

<i>Tancred</i> , count of <i>Leece</i> ,	Mr. Reddith.
<i>Matteo Siffredi</i> , lord high chancellor of <i>Sicily</i> , - - - -	Mr. Jefferson.
<i>Earl Osmond</i> , lord high constable of <i>Sicily</i> , - - - -	Mr. Palmer.
<i>Rodolpho</i> , friend to <i>Tancred</i> , and captain of the guards, - -	Mr. Whitfield.

W O M E N.

<i>Sigismunda</i> , daughter of <i>Siffredi</i> ,	Miss Younge.
<i>Laura</i> , sister of <i>Rodolpho</i> , and friend to <i>Sigismunda</i> , - - -	Miss Sherry.

Barons, Officers, Guards, &c.

SCENE, *the city of Palermo in Sicily.**Tancred*

Tancred and Sigismunda.

A C T I.

SCENE, *the palace.*

Sigismunda and Laura.

SIGISMUNDA.

AH, fatal day to Sicily! The king
Touches his last moments?

Lau. So 'tis fear'd.

Sig. 'The death of those distinguish'd by their station,
' But by their virtue more, awakes the mind
' To solemn dread, and strikes a saddening awe :
' Not that we grieve for them, but for ourselves,
' Left to the toil of life – And yet the best
' Are, by the playful children of this world,
' At once forgot, as they had never been.'

Laura, 'tis said, the heart is sometimes charged
With a prophetic sadness: such, methinks,
Now hangs on mine. The king's approaching death
Suggests a thousand fears. What troubles thence
May throw the state once more into confusion,
What sudden changes in my father's house
May rise, and part me from my dearest Tancred,
Alarms my thoughts.

Lau. The fears of love-sick fancy!
Perversely busy to torment itself.
But be assur'd, your father's steady friendship,
Join'd to a certain genius, that commands,
Not kneels to fortune, will support and cherish,
Here in the public eye of Sicily,
This, I may call him, his adopted son,
The noble Tancred, form'd to all his virtues.

Sig. Ah, form'd to charm his daughter!—This fair
morn

Has

8 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

Has tempted far the chace. Is he not yet
Return'd?

Lau. No.—When your father to the king,
Who now expiring lies, was call'd in haste,
He sent each way his messengers to find him;
With such a look of ardour and impatience,
As if this near event was to count Tancred
Of more importance than I comprehend.

Sig. There lies, my Laura, o'er my Tancred's birth,
A cloud I cannot pierce. With princely accost,
Nay, with respect, which oft I have observ'd
Stealing at times submissive o'er his features,
In Belmont's woods my father rear'd this youth—
Ah, woods! where first my artless bosom learn'd
The sighs of love.—He gives him out the son
Of an old friend, a baron of Apulia,
Who in the late crusado bravely fell.
But then 'tis strange; is all his family
As well as father dead? and all their friends,
Except my sire, the generous good Siffredi?
Had he a mother, sister, brother left,
The last remain of kindred; with what pride,
What rapture, might they fly o'er earth and sea,
To claim this rising honour of their blood!
This bright unknown! this all-accomplish'd youth!
Who charms, too much, the heart of Sigismunda!
' Laura, perhaps your brother knows him better,
' The friend and partner of his freest hours.'
What says Rodolpho? Does he truly credit
This story of his birth?

Lau. He has sometimes,
Like you, his doubts; yet, when maturely weigh'd,
Believes it true. As for lord Tancred's self,
He never entertain'd the slightest thought
That verg'd to doubt; but oft laments his state,
By cruel fortune so ill-pair'd to yours.

Sig. Merit like his, the fortune of the mind,
Beggars all wealth—Then, to your brother, Laura,
He talks of me?

Lau. Of nothing else. Howe'er
The talk begin, it ends with Sigismunda.
Their morning, noontide, and their evening walks,

Are

TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

9

Are full of you ; and all the woods of Belmont
Enamour'd with your name——

Sig. Away, my friend ;

You flatter——yet the dear delusion charms.

Lau. No, Sigismunda, 'tis the strictest truth,
Nor half the truth, I tell you. Even with fondness
My brother talks for ever of the passion,
That fires young Tancred's breast. So much it strikes
him,

He praises love as if he were a lover.

' He blames the false pursuits of vagrant youth,
' Calls them gay folly, a mistaken struggle
' Against best judging nature.' Heaven, he says,
In lavish bounty form'd the heart for love ;
In love included all the finer seeds

Of honour, virtue, friendship, purest bliss——

Sig. Virtuous Rodolpho !

Lau. Then his pleasing theme

He varies to the praises of your lover——

Sig. And what, my Laura, says he on the subject ?

Lau. He says that, tho' he were not nobly born,
Nature has form'd him noble, generous, brave,
' Truly magnanimous, and warmly scorning
' Whatever bears the smallest taint of baseness :
' That every easy virtue is his own ;
' Not learnt by painful labour, but inspir'd,
' Implanted in his soul.'——Chiefly one charm
He in his graceful character observes ;
That tho' his passions burn with high impatience,
And sometimes, from a noble heat of nature,
Are ready to fly off ; yet the least check
Of ruling reason brings them back to temper,
And gentle softness.

Sig. True ! Oh, true, Rodolpho !

Blest be thy kindred worth for loving his !

He is all warmth, all amiable fire,

All quick heroic ardor ! temper'd soft

With gentleness of heart, and manly reason !

If virtue were to wear a human form,

To light it with her dignity and flame,

Then soft'ning mix her smiles and tender graces ;

Oh, she would chuse the person of my Tancred !

Go

10 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

Go on, my friend, go on, and ever praise him ;
The subject knows no bounds, nor can I tire,
While my breast trembles to that sweetest music !
The heart of woman tastes no truer joy,

Is never flatter'd with such dear enchantment——

' 'Tis more than selfish vanity'—as when
She hears the praises of the man she loves——

Lau. Madam, your father comes.

Enter Siffredi.

Sif. [*To an attendant as he enters.*] Lord Tancred
Is found ?

At. My lord, he quickly will be here.

' I scarce could keep before him, though he bid me

' Speed on, to say he would attend your orders.'

Sif. 'Tis well—retire—You, too, my daughter,
leave me.

Sig. I go, my father—But how fares the king ?

Sif. He is no more. Gone to that awful state,
Where kings the crown wear only of their virtues.

Sig. How bright must then be his !—This stroke is
sudden ;

He was this morning well, when to the chase
Lord Tancred went.

Sif. 'Tis true. But at his years
Death gives short notice—Drooping nature then,
Without a gust of pain to shake it, falls.
His death, my daughter, was that happy period
Which few attain. The duties of his day
Were all discharg'd, ' and gratefully enjoy'd
' It's noblest blessings ;' calm as evening skies,
Was his pure mind, and lighted up with hopes
That open heaven ; when, for his last long sleep
Timely prepar'd, a lassitude of life,
A pleasing weariness of mortal joy,
Fell on his soul, and down he sunk to rest.

Oh, may my death be such !——He but one wish
Left unfulfill'd, which was to see count Tancred——

Sig. To see count Tancred !—Pardon me, my lord——

Sif. For what, my daughter ?—But, with such emotion,
Why did you start at mention of count Tancred ?

Sig. Nothing—I only hop'd the dying king

Might

Might mean to make some generous just provision
For this your worthy charge, this noble orphan.

Sif. And he has done it largely—Leave me now—
I want some private conference with lord Tancred.

[*Exeunt Sigismunda and Laura.*]

Sif. My doubts are but too true—If these old eyes
Can trace the marks of love, a mutual passion
Has seiz'd, I fear, my daughter and this prince,
My sovereign now—Should it be so? Ah, there,
There lurks a brooding tempest, that may shake
My long concerted scheme, to settle firm
The public peace and welfare, which the king
Has made the prudent basis of his will—
Away, unworthy views! you shall not tempt me!
Nor interest, nor ambition shall seduce
My fix'd resolve—Perish the selfish thought,
Which our own good prefers to that of millions!
He comes, my king, unconscious of his fortune.

Enter Tancred.

Tan. My lord Siffredi, in your looks I read,
Confirm'd, the mournful news that fly abroad
From tongue to tongue—We then, at last, have lost
The good old king?

Sif. Yes, we have lost a father!
The greatest blessing heaven bestows on mortals,
'And seldom found amidst these wilds of time.'
A good, a worthy king!—Hear me, my Tancred,
And I will tell thee, in a few plain words,
How he deserv'd that best, that glorious title.
'Tis nought complex, 'tis clear as truth and virtue.'
He lov'd his people, deem'd them all his children;
The good exalted, and depress'd the bad.
'He spurn'd the flattering crew, with scorn reject'd
'Their smooth advice that only means themselves,
'Their schemes to aggrandize him into baseness;
'Nor did he less disdain the secret breath,
'The whisper'd tale, that blights a virtuous name.'
He sought alone the good of those for whom,
He was entrusted with the sovereign power:
Well knowing that a people in their rights
And industry protected; living safe
Beneath the sacred shelter of the laws,

12 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

* Encourag'd in their genius, arts, and labours,
 * And happy each as he himself deserves,'
 Are ne'er ungrateful. With unsparing hand
 They will for him provide: their filial love
 And confidence are his unfailing treasure,
 And every honest man his faithful guard.

Tan. A general face of grief o'er spreads the city.
 I mark'd the people, as I hither came,
 In crowds assembled, struck with silent sorrow,
 And pouring forth the noblest praise of tears.
 * Those, whom remembrance of their former woes,
 * And long experience of the vain illusions
 * Of youthful hope, had into wise consent
 * And fear of change corrected, wrung their hands,
 * And often casting up their eyes to heav'n,
 * Gave sign of sad conjecture. Others shew'd,
 * Athwart their grief, or real or affected,
 * A gleam of expectation, from what chance
 * And change might bring.' A mingled murmur ran
 Along the streets; and, from the lonely court
 Of him who can no more assist their fortunes,
 I saw the courtier-fry, with eager haste,
 All hurrying to Constantia.

Sif. Noble youth!
 I joy to hear from thee these just reflections,
 Worthy of riper years—But if they seek
 Constantia, trust me, they mistake their course.

Tan. How! Is she not, my lord, the late king's sister,
 Heir to the crown of Sicily? the last
 Of our fam'd Norman line, and now our queen?

Sif. Tancred, 'tis true; she is the late king's sister,
 The sole surviving offspring of that tyrant
 William the Bad—' so for his vices stil'd;
 * Who spilt much noble blood, and sore oppress'd
 * Th' exhausted land: whence grievous wars arose,
 * And many a dire convulsion shook the state.
 * When he, whose death Sicilia mourns to-day,
 * William, who has and well deserv'd the name
 * Of Good, succeeding to his father's throne,
 * Reliev'd his country's woes—But to return:
 * She is the late king's sister,' born some months
 After the tyrant's death, but not next heir.

Tan.

TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

13

Tan. You much surprise me—May I then presume
To ask who is ?

Sif. Come nearer, noble Tancred,
Son of my care. I must, on this occasion,
Consult thy generous heart ; which, when conducted
By rectitude of mind and honest virtues,
Gives better counsel than the hoary head—
Then know, there lives a prince, here in Palermo,
The lineal offspring of our famous hero,
Roger the First.

Tan. Great heaven !—How far remov'd
From that our mighty founder ?

Sif. His great grandson :
Sprung from his eldest son, who died untimely,
Before his father.

Tan. Ha ! the prince you mean,
Is he not Manfred's son ? The generous, brave,
Unhappy Manfred ! whom the tyrant William,
You just now mention'd, not content to spoil
Of his paternal crown, threw into fetters,
And infamously murder'd ?

Sif. Yes, the same.

Tan. ' By heavens, I joy to find our Norman reign,
' The world's sole light amidst these barbarous ages,
' Yet rears its head ; and shall not, from the lance,
' Pass to the feeble distaff.'—But this prince,
Where has he lain conceal'd ?

Sif. The late good king,
By noble pity mov'd, contriv'd to save him
From his dire father's unrelenting rage,
And had him rear'd in private, as became
His birth and hopes, with high and princely nurture,
Till now, too young to rule a troubled state,
By civil broils most miserably torn,
He in his safe retreat has lain conceal'd,
His birth and fortune to himself unknown ;
But when the dying king to me entrusted,
As to the chancellor of the realm, his will,
His successor he nam'd him.

Tan. Happy youth !
He then will triumph o'er his father's foes,
O'er haughty Osmond, and the tyrant's daughter.

B

Sif.

Sif. Ay, that is what I dread—that heat of youth ;
 There lurks, I fear, perdition to the state,
 I dread the horrors of rekindled war :
 Tho' dead, the tyrant still is to be fear'd ;
 His daughter's party still is strong and numerous :
 Her friend, earl Olmond, constable of Sicily,
 Experienc'd, brave, high-born, of mighty interest.
 Better the prince and princess should by marriage
 Unite their friends, their interest, and their claims ;
 Then will the peace and welfare of the land
 On a firm basis rise.

Tan. My lord Siffredi,
 If by myself I of this prince may judge,
 That scheme will scarce succeed—Your prudent age
 In vain will counsel, if the heart forbid it—
 But wherefore fear ? The right is clearly his ;
 ' And, under your direction, with each man
 ' Of worth, and stedfast loyalty, to back
 ' At once the king's appointment and his birthright,
 ' There is no ground for fear. They have great odds,
 ' Against th' astonish'd sons of violence,
 ' Who fight with awful justice on their side.'
 All Sicily will rouse, all faithful hearts
 Will range themselves around prince Manfred's son.
 For me, I here devote me to the service
 Of this young prince ; I every drop of blood
 Will lose with joy, with transport in his cause—
 ' Pardon my warmth—but that, my lord, will never
 ' To this decision come'—Then, find the prince ;
 Lose not a moment to awaken in him
 The royal soul. Perhaps, he now desponding,
 Pines in a corner, and laments his fortune ;
 That in the narrower bounds of private life
 He must confine his aims, those swelling virtues
 Which from his noble father he inherits.

Sif. Perhaps, regardless, in the common bane
 Of youth he melts, in vanity and love.
 But if the seeds of virtue glow within him,
 I will awake a higher sense, a love
 That grasps the loves and happiness of millions.

Tan. Why that surmise ? Or should he love, Siffredi,
 I doubt not, it is nobly, which will raise

And

And animate his virtues—Oh, permit me
To plead the cause of youth—Their virtue oft,
In pleasure's soft enchantment lull'd a while,
Forgets itself; it sleeps and gayly dreams,
Till great occasion rouse it; then, all flame,
It walks abroad, with heighten'd soul and vigour,
And by the change astonishes the world.

‘ Even with a kind of sympathy, I feel
‘ The joy that waits this prince; when all the powers,
‘ Th’ expanding heart can wish, of doing good;
‘ Whatever swells ambition, or exalts
‘ The human soul into divine emotions,
‘ All crowd at once upon him.

‘ *Sif.* Ah, my Tancred,
‘ Nothing so easy as in speculation,
‘ And at a distance seen, the course of honour,
‘ A fair delightful champain strew'd with flowers.
‘ But when the practice comes; when our fond passions,
‘ Pleasure, and pride, and self-indulgence, throw
‘ Their magic dust around, the prospect roughens:
‘ Then dreadful passes, craggy mountains rise,
‘ Cliffs to be scal'd, and torrents to be stemm'd:
‘ Then toil ensues, and perseverance stern;
‘ And endless combats with our grosser sense,
‘ Oft lost, and oft renew'd; and generous pain
‘ For others felt; and, harder lesson still!
‘ Our honest bliss for others sacrific'd;
‘ And all the rugged task of virtue quells
‘ The stoutest heart of common resolution.
‘ Few get above this turbid scene of strife.
‘ Few gain the summit, breathe that purest air,
‘ That heavenly ether, which untroubled sees
‘ The storm of vice and passion rage below.

‘ *Tan.* Most true, my lord. But why thus augure ill?
‘ You seem to doubt this prince. I know him not.
‘ Yet, Oh, methinks, my heart could answer for him!
‘ The juncture is so high, so strong the gale
‘ That blows from Heaven, as through the dearest soul
‘ Might breathe the godlike energy of virtue.’

Sif. Hear him, immortal shades of his great fathers!—
Forgive me, Sir, this trial of your heart.
Thou! thou, art he!

16 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

Tan. Siffredi !

Sif. Tancred, thou !

Thou art the man, of all the many thousands
That toil upon the bosom of this isle
By heaven elected to command the rest,
To rule, protect them, and to make them happy !

Tan. Manfred my father ! I the last support
Of the fam'd Norman line, that awes the world !
I, who this morning wander'd forth an orphan,
Outcast of all but thee, my second father !
Thus call'd to glory ! to the first great lot
Of human kind !—Oh, wonder-working hand,
That, in majestic silence, sways at will
The mighty movements of unbounded nature ;
Oh, grant me, heaven, the virtues to sustain
This awful burden of so many heroes !
Let me not be exalted into shame,
Set up the worthless pageant of vain grandeur.
Mean time I thank the justice of the king,
Who has my right bequeath'd me. Thee, Siffredi,
I thank thee—Oh, I ne'er enough can thank thee !
Yes, thou hast been—thou art—shalt be my father !
Thou shalt direct my unexperienc'd years,
Shalt be the ruling head, and I the hand.

Sif. It is enough for me—to see my sovereign
Assert his virtues, and maintain his honour.

Tan. I think, my lord, you said the king committed
To you his will. I hope it is not clogg'd
With any base conditions, any clause,
To tyrannize my heart, and to Constantia
Enslave my hand devoted to another.
The hint you just now gave of that alliance,
You must imagine, wakes my fear. But know,
In this alone I will not bear dispute,
Not even from thee, Siffredi !—Let the council
Be strait assembled, and the will there open'd :
Thence issue speedy orders to convene,
This day ere noon, the senate : where those barons,
Who now are in Palermo, will attend,
To pay their ready homage to the king,
Their rightful king, who claims his native crown,
And will not be a king by deeds and parchments.

Sif.

Sif. I go, my liege. But once again permit me
To tell you—Now, now, is the trying crisis,
That must determine of your future reign.
Oh, with heroic rigour watch your heart!
And to the sovereign duties of the king,
Th' unequal'd pleasures of a God on earth,
Submit the common joys, the common passions,
Nay, even the virtues of the private man.

Tan. Of that no more. They not oppose, but aid,
Invigorate, cherish, and reward each other.
'The kind all-ruling wisdom is no tyrant.' [*Exit Siff.*]

Tan. Now, generous Sigismunda, comes my turn
To shew my love was not of thine unworthy,
When fortune bade me blush to look to thee.
But what is fortune to the wish of love?
A miserable bankrupt! 'Oh, 'tis poor,
'Tis scanty all, whate'er we can bestow!
'The wealth of kings is wretchedness and want!'
Quick, let me find her! taste that highest joy,
Th' exalted heart can know, the mix'd effusion.
Of gratitude and love!—Behold, she comes!

Enter Sigismunda.

Tan. My fluttering soul was all on wing to find thee,
My love, my Sigismunda!

Sig. Oh, my Tancred!
Tell me, what means this mystery and gloom
That lowers around? Just now, involv'd in thought,
My father shot athwart me—You, my lord,
Seem strangely mov'd—I fear some dark event,
From the king's death, to trouble our repose,
That tender calm we in the woods of Belmont
So happily enjoy'd—Explain this hurry,
What means it? Say.

Tan. It means that we are happy!
Beyond our most romantic wishes happy!

Sig. You but perplex me more.

Tan. It means, my fairest,
That thou art queen of Sicily; and I
The happiest of mankind! 'than monarch more!'
Because with thee I can adorn my throne.
Manfred, who fell by tyrant William's rage,

18 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

Fam'd Roger's lineal issue, was my father. [Pausing.
 You droop, my love; dejected on a sudden;
 You seem to mourn my fortune—The soft tear
 Springs in thy eye—Oh, let me kiss it off—
 Why this, my Sigismunda?

Sig. Royal Tancred,
 None at your glorious fortune can like me
 Rejoice;---yet me alone, of all Sicilians,
 It makes unhappy.

Tan. I should hate it then!
 Should throw, with scorn, the splendid ruin from me!—
 No, Sigismunda, 'tis my hope with thee
 To share it, whence it draws its richest value.

Sig. You are my sovereign—I at humble distance—

Tan. Thou art my queen! the sovereign of my soul!

• You never reign'd with such triumphant lustre,
 • Such winning charms as now; yet, thou art still
 The dear, the tender, generous Sigismunda!
 • Who, with a heart exalted far above
 • Those selfish views that charm the common breast,
 • Stoop'd from the height of life and courted beauty,
 • Then, then, to love me, when I seem'd of fortune
 • The hopeless outcast, when I had no friend,
 • None to protect and own me, but thy father.
 • And wouldst thou claim all goodness to thyself?
 • Canst thou thy Tancred deem so dully form'd,
 • Of such gross clay, just as I reach the point—
 • A point my wildest hopes could never image---
 • In that great moment, full of every virtue,
 • That I should then so mean a traitor prove
 • To the best bliss and honour of mankind,
 • So much disgrace the human heart, as then,
 • For the dead form of flattery and pomp,
 • The faithless joys of courts, to quit kind truth,
 • The cordial sweets of friendship and of love,
 • The life of life! my all, my Sigismunda!
 • I could upbraid thy fears, call them unkind,
 • Cruel, unjust, an outrage to my heart,
 • Did they not spring from love.

• *Sig.* Think not, my lord,
 • That to such vulgar doubts I can descend.'

Your

Your heart, I know, disdains the little thought
 Of changing with the vain, external change
 Of circumstance and fortune. ' Rather thence
 ' It would, with rising ardour, greatly feel
 ' A noble pride, to shew itself the same.'
 But, ah ! the hearts of kings are not their own.
 ' There is a haughty duty that subjects them
 ' To chains of state, to wed the public welfare,
 ' And not indulge the tender, private virtues.'
 Some high-descended princess, who will bring
 New power and interest to your throne, demands
 Your royal hand—perhaps Constantia—

Tan. She !

Oh, name her not ! Were I this moment free,
 And disengag'd as he who ' never felt,
 ' The powerful eye of beauty,' never sigh'd
 For matchless worth like thine, I should abhor
 All thoughts of that alliance. Her fell father
 Most basely murder'd mine ; ' and she, his daughter,
 ' Supported by his barbarous party still,
 ' His pride inherits, his imperious spirit,
 ' And insolent pretensions to my throne.'
 And canst thou deem me, then, so poorly tame,
 So cool a traitor to my father's blood,
 As from the prudent cowardice of state
 E'er to submit to such a base proposal ?
 ' Detested thought ! Oh, doubly, doubly hateful !
 ' From the two strongest passions ; from aversion
 ' To this Constantia—and from love to thee.
 ' Custom, 'tis true, a venerable tyrant,
 ' O'er servile man extends a blind dominion :
 ' The pride of kings enslaves them ; their ambition,
 ' Or interest, lords it o'er the better passions.
 ' But vain their talk, mask'd under specious words
 ' Of station, duty, and of public good.'
 They whom just Heaven has to a throne exalted,
 To guard the rights and liberties of others,
 What duty binds them to betray their own ?
 ' For me, my free-born heart shall bear no dictates,
 ' But those of truth and honour ; wear no chains,
 ' But the dear chains of love, and Sigismunda !'

Or

20 . TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

Or if, indeed, my choice must be directed
By views of public good, whom shall I chuse
So fit to grace, to dignify a crown,
And beam sweet mercy on a happy people,
As thee, my love ? Whom place upon my throne
But thee, descended from the good Siffredi ?

'Tis fit that heart be thine, which drew from him
'Whate'er can make it worthy thy acceptance.'

Sig. Cease, cease to raise my hopes above my duty.
Charm me no more, my Tancred !—Oh, that we
In those blest woods, where first you won my soul,
Had pass'd our gentle days ; far from the toil
And pomp of courts ! Such is the wish of love ;

Of love, that with delightful weakness, knows
No bliss, and no ambition but itself.
But in the world's full light, those charming dreams,
Those fond illusions vanish. Awful duties !
The tyranny of men, even your own heart,
Where lurks a sense your passion stifles now,
And proud imperious honour call you from me.'

'Tis all in vain—You cannot hush a voice
That murmurs here—I must not be persuaded !

Tan. [*Kneeling.*] Hear me, thou soul of all my hopes
and wishes !

And witness Heaven, prime source of love and joy !
Not a whole warring world combin'd against me ;
Its pride, its splendor, its imposing forms,
Nor interest, nor ambition, nor the face
Of solemn state, not even thy father's wisdom,
Shall ever shake my faith to Sigismunda !

[*Trumpets and acclamations heard.*]

But, hark ! the public voice to duties calls me,
Which with unwearied zeal I will discharge ;
And thou, yes, thou, shalt be my bright reward—
Yet—ere I go—to hush thy lovely fears, [blank,
Thy delicate objections— [*Writes his name.*] Take this
Sign'd with my name, and give it to thy father :
Tell him, 'tis my command, it be fill'd up
With a most strict and solemn marriage-contract.
How dear each tie ! how charming to my soul !
That more unites me to my Sigismunda..

For

For thee, and for my people's good to live,
Is all the bliss which sovereign power can give.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *a grand saloon.*

Enter Siffredi.

SIFFREDI.

SO far 'tis well——The late king's will proceeds
Upon the plan I counsel'd; that prince Tancred
Shall make Constantia partner of his throne.
Oh, great, Oh, wish'd event! 'whence the dire seeds
' Of dark intestine broils, of civil war,
' And all its dreadful miseries and crimes,
' Shall be for ever rooted from the land.
' May these dim eyes, long blasted by the rage
' Of cruel faction and my country's woes,
' Tir'd with the toils and vanities of life,
' Behold this period, then be clos'd in peace!'
But how this mighty obstacle surmount,
Which love has thrown betwixt? 'Love, that disturbs
' The schemes of wisdom still; that, wing'd with passion,
' Blind and impetuous in its fond pursuits,
' Leaves the grey-headed reason far behind.
' Alas, how frail the state of human bliss!
' When even our honest passions oft destroy it.
' I was to blame, in solitude and shades,
' Infectious scenes! to trust their youthful hearts.
' Would I had mark'd the rising flame, that now
' Burns out with dangerous force!'—My daughter owns
Her passion for the king; she trembling own'd it,
With prayers, and tears, and tender supplications,
That almost shook my firmness—And this blank,
Which his rash fondness gave her, shews how much,
To what a wild extravagance he loves——
I see no means—it foils my deepest thought—
How to controul this madness of the king,
That wears the face of virtue, and will thence

Disdain

Disdain restraint, 'will, from his generous heart,
 'Borrow new rage, even speciously oppose
 'To reason reason'—But it must be done.
 'My own advice, of which I more and more
 'Approve, the strict conditions of the will,
 'Highly demand his marriage with Constantia;
 'Or else her party has a fair pretence——
 'And all, at once, is horror and confusion——
 'How issue from this maze?'—The crowding barons
 Here summon'd to the palace, meet already,
 To pay their homage, and confirm the will.
 On a few moments hangs the public fate,
 On a few hasty moments—Ha! there shone
 A gleam of hope—Yes, with this very paper
 I yet will save him——' Necessary means,
 'For good and noble ends, can ne'er be wrong.
 'In that resistless that peculiar case,
 'Deceit is truth and virtue——But how hold
 'This lion in the toil?—Oh, I will form it
 'Of such a fatal thread, twist it so strong
 'With all the ties of honour and of duty,
 'That his most desperate fury shall not break
 'The honest snare.'—Here is the royal hand—
 I will beneath it write a perfect, full,
 And absolute agreement to the will;
 Which read before the nobles of the realm
 Assembled, in the sacred face of Sicily,
 Constantia present, every heart and eye
 Fix'd on their monarch, every tongue applauding,
 He must submit, his dream of love must vanish—
 It shall be done——To me, I know, 'tis ruin;
 But safety to the public; to the king.
 I will not reason more, 'I will not listen
 'Even to the voice of honour.'—No—'tis fix'd!
 I here devote me for my prince and country;
 Let them be safe, and let me nobly perish!
 Behold, earl Osmond comes, without whose aid
 My schemes are all in vain.

Enter Osmond.

Ofm. My lord Siffredi,
 I from the council hasten'd to Constantia,
 And have accomplish'd what we there propos'd.

The

The princess to the will submits her claims.
 She with her presence means to grace the senate,
 And of your royal charge, young Tancred's hand,
 Accept. ' At first, indeed, it shock'd her hopes
 ' Of reigning sole, this new, surprizing scene
 ' Of Manfred's son, appointed by the king,
 ' With her joint heir——But I so fully shew'd
 ' The justice of the case, the public good,
 ' And sure establish'd peace which thence would rise,
 ' Join'd to the strong necessity that urg'd her,
 ' If on Sicilia's throne she meant to sit,
 ' As to the wise disposal of the will
 ' Her high ambition tam'd.' Methought, besides,
 I could discern, that not from prudence merely
 She to this choice submitted.

Siff. Noble Osmond,
 You have in this done to the public great
 And signal service. Yes, I must avow it;
 This frank and ready instance of your zeal,
 In such a trying crisis of the state,
 ' When interest and ambition might have warp'd
 ' Your views, I own, this truly generous virtue'
 Upbraids the rashness of my former judgment.
Osmond. Siffredi, no. To you belongs the praise;
 ' The glorious work is yours. Had I not seiz'd,
 ' Improv'd the wish'd occasion to root out
 ' Division from the land, and save my country,
 ' I had been base, been infamous for ever.'
 'Tis you, my lord, to whom the many thousands,
 That by the barbarous sword of civil war
 Had fallen inglorious, owe their lives; ' to you
 ' The sons of this fair isle, from her first peers
 ' Down to the swain who tills her golden plains,
 ' Owe their safe homes, their soft domestic hours,
 ' And thro' late time posterity shall bless you,
 ' You who advis'd this will.'—I blush to think
 I have so long oppos'd the best good man
 In Sicily——' With what impartial care
 ' Ought we to watch o'er prejudice and passion,
 ' Nor trust too much the jaundic'd eye of party!
 ' Henceforth its vain delusions I renounce,
 ' Its hot determinations, that confine

‘ All merit and all virtue to itself.’
 To yours I join my hand ; with you will own
 No interest and no party but my country.
 Nor is your friendship only my ambition :
 There is a dearer name, the name of father,
 By which I should rejoice to call Siffredi.
 Your daughter’s hand would to the public weal
 Unite my private happiness.

Siff. My lord,
 You have my glad consent. To be allied
 To your distinguish’d family and merit,
 I shall esteem an honour. From my soul
 I here embrace earl Osmond as my friend
 And son.

Os. You make him happy. ‘ This assent,
 ‘ So frank and warm, to what I long have wish’d,
 ‘ Engages all my gratitude ; at once,
 ‘ In the first blossom, it matures our friendship.’
 I from this moment vow myself the friend
 And zealous servant of Siffredi’s house.

Enter an officer belonging to the court.

Off. [To Siffredi.] The king, my lord, demands your
 speedy presence.

Siff. I will attend him strait—Farewel, my lord :
 The senate meets : there, a few moments hence,
 I will rejoin you.

Os. There, my noble lord,
 We will complete this salutary work ;
 Will there begin a new auspicious æra.

[*Exeunt Siffredi and Officer.*]

Siffredi gives his daughter to my wishes—
 But does she give herself ? Gay, young, and flatter’d,
 Perhaps engag’d, will she her youthful heart
 Yield to my harsher, uncomplying years ?
 I am not form’d, by flattery and praise,
 By sighs and tears, and all the whining trade
 Of love, to feed a fair-one’s vanity ;
 To charm at once and spoil her. These soft arts
 Nor suit my years nor temper ; these be left
 To boys, and doating age. A prudent father,
 By nature charg’d to guide and rule her choice,
 Relinquish his daughter to a husband’s power,

Who with superior dignity, with reason,
And manly tenderness, will ever love her ;
Not first a kneeling slave, and then a tyrant.

Enter Barons.

My lords, I greet you well. This wondrous day
Unites us all in amity and friendship.
We meet to-day with open hearts and looks,
Not gloom'd by party, scouling on each other,
But all the children of one happy isle,
The social sons of liberty. No pride,
No passion now, no thwarting views divide us :
Prince Manfred's line, at last, to William's join'd,
Combines us in one family of brothers.
This to the late good king's well-order'd will,
And wise Siffredi's generous care we owe.
I truly give you joy. First of you all,
I here renounce those errors and divisions
That have so long disturb'd our peace, and seem'd,
Fermenting still, to threaten new commotions —
By time instructed, let us not disdain
To quit mistakes. We all, my lords, have err'd.
Men may, I find, be honest, tho' they differ.

1 Bar. Who follows not, my lord, the fair example
You set us all, whate'er be his pretence,
Loves not with single and unbiass'd heart,
His country as he ought.

2 Bar. Oh, beauteous peace !
Sweet union of a state ! what else, but thou,
Gives safety, strength, and glory to a people ?
I bow, lord constable, beneath the snow
Of many years ; yet in my breast revives
A youthful flame. Methinks, I see again
Those gentle days renew'd, that bless'd our isle,
Ere by this wasteful fury of division,
Worse than our *Ætna's* most destructive fires,
It desolated sunk. I see our plains
Unbounded waving with the gifts of harvest ;
Our seas with commerce throng'd ; our busy ports
With chearful toil. Our *Enna* blooms afresh ;
Afresh the sweets of thymy *Hybla* flow.
Our nymphs and shepherds, sporting in each vale,
Inspire new song, and wake the pastoral reed—

- ' The tongue of age is fond—Come, come, my sons ;
- ' I long to see this prince, of whom the world
- ' Speaks largely well—His father was my friend,
- ' The brave, unhappy Manfred—Come, my lords ;
- ' We tarry here too long.

' *Enter two Officers, keeping off the crowd.*

- ' *One of the crowd.* Shew us our king,
- ' The valiant Manfred's son, who lov'd the people—
- ' We must, we will behold him—Give us way.
- ' *1 Off.* Pray, gentlemen, give back—it must not be—
- ' Give back, I pray—on such a glad occasion,
- ' I would not ill entreat the lowest of you.
- ' *2 Man of the Crowd.* Nay, give us but a glimpse of
our young king.

- ' We, more than any baron of them all,
- ' Will pay him true allegiance.

- ' *2 Off.* Friends—indeed
- ' You cannot pass this way——We have strict orders,
- ' To keep for him himself, and for the barons,
- ' All these apartments clear——Go to the gate
- ' That fronts the sea, you there will find admittance.
- ' *All.* Long live king Tancred! Manfred's son--huzza!
- ' [*Crowd goes off.*]

Enter 1st Officer.

- 1 Off.* *My lord, the king is rob'd, the senate sits,*
And waits your presence. [*Exeunt Osmond and Barons.*
[*Shouts within.*

Enter 2d Officer.

- 2 Off.* *I have not seen*
So wild a tumult ; the town is mad with transport ;
Shew us our king, they cry, our Norman king,
The valiant Manfred's son, who lov'd the people.
In vain I told'em, that we had strict orders
To keep for him himself, and for the barons,
All these apartments clear. Nought could
Appease their storm of zeal ; 'till at
The northern gate, that fronts the sea,
I promis'd them admittance.

- 1 Off.* I do not marvel at their rage of joy :
He is a brave and amiable prince.
When in my lord Siffredi's house I liv'd,
Ere by his favour I obtain'd this office,

I there

I there remember well the young count Tancred.
 To see him and to love him were the same ;
 He was so noble in his ways, yet still
 So affable and mild——Well, well, old Sicily,
 Yet happy days await thee !

2 *Off.* Grant it, Heaven !

' We have seen sad and troublesome times enough.'
 He is, they say, to wed the late king's sister,
 Constantia.

1 *Off.* Friend, of that I greatly doubt.
 Or I mistake, or lord Siffredi's daughter,
 The gentle Sigismunda, has his heart.
 If one may judge by kindly cordial looks,
 And fond assiduous care to please each other,
 Most certainly they love——Oh, be they blest,
 As they deserve ! It were great pity aught
 Should part a matchless pair ; the glory he,
 And she the blooming grace of Sicily !

2 *Off.* My lord Rodolpho comes.

Enter Rodolpho from the senate.

Rod. My honest friends,
 You may retire. [*Officers go out.*] A storm is in the wind.
 This will perplexes all. No, Tancred never
 Can stoop to these conditions, which at once
 Attack his rights, his honour, and his love.
 ' Those wise old men, those plodding, grave, state pedants,
 ' Forget the course of youth ; their crooked prudence,
 ' To baseness verging still, forgets to take
 ' Into their fine-spun schemes the generous heart,
 ' That thro' the cobweb system bursting, lays
 ' Their labours waste——So will this business prove,
 ' Or I mistake the king——back from the pomp
 ' He seem'd at first to shrink, and round his brow
 ' I mark'd a gathering cloud, when, by his side,
 ' As if design'd to share the public homage,
 ' He saw the tyrant's daughter. But confess'd,
 ' At least to me, the doubling tempest frown'd,
 ' And shook his swelling bosom, when he heard
 Th' unjust, the base conditions of the will.
 Uncertain, tost in cruel agitation,
 He oft, methought, address'd himself to speak,
 And interrupt Siffredi ; who appear'd,

With conscious haste, to dread that interruption,
 And hurry'd on——But hark! I hear a noise,
 As if th' assembly rose——' Ha! Sigismunda,
 ' Oppress'd with grief, and wrapp'd in pensive sorrow,
 ' Passes along.

' [Sigismunda and attendants pass thro' the back scene.]

Enter Laura.

Lau. Your high-prais'd friend, the king,
 Is false, most vilely false. The meanest slave
 Had shewn a nobler heart; ' nor grossly thus,
 ' By the first bait ambition spread, been gull'd.'
 He Manfred's son! away! it cannot be!
 The son of that brave prince could ne'er ' betray
 ' Those rights so long usurp'd from his great father,
 ' Which he, this day, by such amazing fortune,
 ' Had just regain'd: he ne'er could' sacrifice
 All faith, all honour, gratitude and love,
 ' Even just resentment of his father's fate,
 ' And pride itself; whate'er exalts a man
 ' Above the groveling sons of peasant mud,'
 All in a moment—And for what? why, truly,
 For kind permission, gracious leave, to sit
 On his own throne, with tyrant William's daughter!

Rod. I stand amaz'd—You surely wrong him, Laura.
 There must be some mistake.

Laur. There can be none!
 Siffredi read his full and free consent
 Before th' applauding senate. True indeed,
 A small remain of shame, a timorous weakness,
 Even dastardly in falsehood, made him blush
 To act this scene in Sigismunda's eye,
 Who sunk beneath his perfidy and baseness.
 Hence, till to-morrow he adjourn'd the senate!
 To-morrow, fix'd with infamy to crown him!
 Then, leading off his gay, triumphant princess,
 He left the poor, unhappy Sigismunda,
 To bend her trembling steps to that sad home
 His faithless vows will render hateful to her——
 He comes—Farewel—I cannot bear his presence!

[*Exit Laura.*]

Enter Tancred and Siffredi, meeting.

Tan. Avoid me, hoary traitor!—Go, Rodolpho,

Give

Give orders that all passages this way
 Be shut—Defend me from a hateful world,
 The bane of peace and honour—then return—[*Ex. Rod.*
 What! dost thou haunt me still? Oh, monstrous insult!
 Unparallel'd indignity! Just Heaven!
 Was ever king, was ever man so treated;
 So trampled into baseness?

Siff. Here, my liege,
 Here strike! I nor deserve, nor ask for mercy. [hold
 ‘*Tan.* Distraction!—Oh, my soul!—Hold, reason,
 ‘Thy giddy seat—Oh, this inhuman outrage
 ‘Unhinges thought!

‘*Siff.* Exterminate thy servant.’
Tan. All, all but this I could have borne—but this!
 This daring insolence beyond example!
 This murderous stroke, that stabs my peace for ever!
 That wounds me there—there! where the human heart
 Most exquisitely feels——

Siff. Oh, bear it not,
 My royal lord; appease on me your vengeance!

Tan. Did ever tyrant image aught so cruel!
 The lowest slave that crawls upon the earth,
 Robb’d of each comfort Heaven bestows on mortals,
 On the bare ground has still his virtue left,
 The sacred treasure of an honest heart,
 Which thou hast dar’d, with rash, audacious hand,
 And impious fraud, in me to violate——

Siff. Behold, my lord, that rash, audacious hand,
 Which not repents its crime——Oh, glorious, happy!
 If by my ruin I can save your honour.

Tan. Such honour I renounce; with sovereign scorn
 Greatly detest it, and its mean adviser!

Hast thou not dar’d beneath my name to shelter

‘My name, for other purposes design’d,
 ‘Given from the fondness of a faithful heart,
 ‘With the best love o’erflowing!—Hast thou not,
 Beneath thy sovereign’s name, basely presum’d
 To shield a lie—a lie, in public utter’d,
 To all deluded Sicily? But know,
 This poor contrivance is as weak as base.

‘In such a wretched toil none can be held

‘But fools and cowards——Soon thy flimsy arts,
 ‘Touch’d

' Touch'd by my just, my burning indignation,
 ' Shall burst like threads in flame--Thy doating prudence
 ' But more secures the purpose it would shake.
 ' Had my resolves been wavering and doubtful,
 ' This would confirm them, make them fix'd as fate;
 ' This adds the only motive that was wanting
 ' To urge them on thro' war and desolation.'

What! marry her! Constantia! her! the daughter
 Of the fell tyrant who destroy'd my father!

The very thought is madness! Ere thou see'st
 The torch of Hymen light these hated nuptials,
 Thou shalt behold Sicilia wrapt in flames,
 Her cities raz'd, her vallies drench'd with slaughter—
 Love set aside, my pride assumes the quarrel;
 My honour now is up; in spite of thee,
 A world combin'd against me, I will give
 This scatter'd will in fragments to the winds,
 Assert my rights, the freedom of my heart,
 Crush all who dare oppose me to the dust,
 And heap perdition on thee!

Siff. Sir, 'tis just.

Exhaust on me your rage; I claim it all.
 But for these public threats thy passion utters,
 'Tis what thou canst not do.

Tan. I cannot! ha!

' Driven to the dreadful brink of such dishonour,
 ' Enough to make the tameest coward brave,
 ' And into fierceness rouse the mildest nature,'
 What shall arrest my vengeance? Who?

Siff. Thyself.

Tan. Away! Dare not to justify thy crime!
 That, that alone can aggravate its horror,
 Add insolence to insolence—perhaps
 May make my rage forget—

Siff. Oh, let it burst

On this grey head, devoted to thy service!
 But when the storm has vented all its fury,
 Thou then must hear—nay more, I know thou wilt—
 Wilt hear the calm, yet stronger voice of reason.
 ' Thou must reflect that a whole people's safety,
 ' The weal of trusted millions, should bear down,
 ' Thyself the judge, the fondest partial pleasure.'

Thou

Thou must reflect that there are other duties,
 ' A nobler pride, a more exalted honour,
 ' Superior pleasures far, that will oblige,
 ' Compel thee, to abide by this my deed,
 ' Unwarranted perhaps in common justice,
 ' But which necessity, ev'n virtue's tyrant,
 ' With awful voice commanded'—Yes, thou must,
 In calmer hours, divest thee of thy love,
 These common passions of the vulgar breast,
 This boiling heat of youth, and be a king,
 The lover of thy people!

Tan. ' Truths, ill employ'd,
 ' Abus'd to colour guilt!—A king! a king!
 Yes, I will be a king, but not a slave;
 In this will be a king; in this my people
 Shall learn to judge how I will guard their rights,
 When they behold me vindicate my own.
 But have I, say, been treated like a king?—
 Heavens! could I stoop to such outrageous usage,
 I were a mean, a shameless wretch, unworthy
 To wield a sceptre in a land of slaves,
 A soil abhorr'd of virtue; should belie
 My father's blood, belie those very maxims,
 At other times, you taught my youth——*Siffredi!*

[In a soften'd tone of voice.]

Siff. Behold, my prince, thy poor old servant,
 Whose darling care, these twenty years, has been
 To nurse thee up to virtue; ' who, for thee,
 ' Thy glory, and thy weal, renounces all,
 ' All interest or ambition can pour forth;
 ' What many a selfish father would pursue
 ' Thro' treachery and crimes:' behold him here,
 Bent on his feeble knees, to beg, conjure thee,
 With tears to beg thee to controul thy passion,
 And save thyself, thy honour, and thy people!
 Kneeling with me, behold the many thousands
 To thy protection trusted; fathers, mothers,
 The sacred front of venerable age,
 The tender virgin, and the helpless infant;
 ' The ministers of Heaven, those who maintain,
 ' Around thy throne, the majesty of rule;
 ' And those, whose labour, scorch'd by winds and sun,
 ' Feeds

' Feeds the rejoicing public ;' see them all,
 Here at thy feet, conjuring thee to save them
 From misery and war, from crimes and rapine !
 ' Can there be aught, kind Heaven, in self-indulgence
 ' To weigh down these, this aggregate of love,
 ' With which compar'd, the dearest private passion
 ' Is but the wafted dust upon the balance ?'
 Turn not away——Oh, is there not some part
 In thy great heart, so sensible to kindness
 And generous warmth, some nobler part, to feel
 The prayers and tears of these, the mingled voice
 Of Heaven and earth ?

Tan. There is, and thou hast touch'd it.
 Rise, rise, Siffredi——Oh, thou hast undone me !
 Unkind old man !——Oh, ill-entreated Tancred !
 Which way so'er I turn, dishonour rears
 Her hideous front—and misery and ruin.
 ' Was it for this you took such care to form me ?
 ' For this imbu'd me with the quickest sense
 ' Of shame ; these finer feelings, that ne'er vex
 ' The common mass of mortals, dully happy
 ' In blest'd insensibility ? Oh, rather
 ' You should have fear'd my heart, taught me that power
 ' And splendid interest lord it still o'er virtue ;
 ' That, gilded by prosperity and pride,
 ' There is no shame, no meanness ; temper'd thus,
 ' I had been fit to rule a venal world.
 ' Alas ! what meant thy wantonness of prudence ?'
 Why have you rais'd this miserable conflict
 Betwixt the duties of the king and man ?
 Set virtue against virtue ?——' Ah, Siffredi !
 ' 'Tis thy superfluous, thy unfeeling wisdom,
 ' That has involv'd me in a maze of error
 ' Almost beyond retreat'——But hold, my soul,
 Thy steady purpose——Tost by various passions,
 To this eternal anchor keep——There is,
 Can be no public without private virtue——
 Then, mark me well, observe what I command ;
 ' It is the sole expedient now remaining——'
 To-morrow, when the senate meets again,
 Unfold the whole, unravel the deceit ;
 ' Nor that alone ; try to repair its mischief ;

' There

TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

33

‘ There all thy power, thy eloquence and interest
 ‘ Exert to reinstate me in my rights,
 ‘ And from thy own dark snares to disembroil me.’—
 Start not, my lord—This must and shall be done!
 Or here our friendship ends—Howe’er disguis’d,
 Whatever thy pretence, thou art a traitor.

Siff. I should indeed deserve the name of traitor,
 And even a traitor’s fate, had I so slightly,
 From principles so weak, done what I did,
 As e’er to disavow it——

Tan. Ha!

Siff. My liege,
 Expect not this—Tho’ practis’d long in courts,
 I have not so far learn’d their subtle trade,
 To veer obedient with each gust of passion.
 I honour thee, I venerate thy orders,
 But honour more my duty. Nought on earth
 Shall ever shake me from that solid rock,
 Nor smiles, nor frowns.——

Tan. You will not then?

Siff. I cannot.

Tan. Away! begone!—Oh, my Rodolpho, come,
 And save me from this traitor!—Hence, I say.

‘ Avoid my presence strait! and know, old man,
 ‘ Thou, my worst foe beneath the mask of friendship,
 ‘ Who, not content to trample in the dust
 ‘ My dearest rights, dost with cool insolence
 ‘ Persist, and call it duty; hadst thou not
 ‘ A daughter that protects thee, thou shouldst feel
 ‘ The vengeance thou deservest.’——No reply!

Away!

[*Ex. Siff.*]

Enter Rodolpho.

Rod. What can incense my prince so highly
 Against his friend Siffredi!

Tan. Friend! Rodolpho?
 When I have told thee what this friend has done,
 How play’d me like a boy, a base-born wretch,
 Who had nor heart nor spirit, thou wilt stand
 Amaz’d, and wonder at my stupid patience.

‘ *Rod.* I heard, with mix’d astonishment and grief,
 ‘ The king’s unjust, dishonourable will,
 ‘ Void in itself—I saw you stung with rage,

‘ And

- ' And writhing in the snare ; just as I went,
 ' At your command, to wait you here—but that
 ' Was the king's deed, not his.
 ' *Tan.* Oh, he advis'd it !
 ' These many years he has in secret hatch'd
 ' This black contrivance, glories in the scheme,
 ' And proudly plumes him with his traiterous virtue.
 ' But that was pought, Rodolpho, nothing, nothing !
 ' Oh, that was gentle, blameless to what follow'd !
 ' I had, my friend, to Sigismunda given,
 ' To hush her fears, in the full gush of fondness,
 ' A blank, sign'd with my hand—and he, Oh, Heavens !
 ' Was ever such a wild attempt !—he wrote
 ' Beneath my name an absolute compliance
 ' To this detested will ; nay, dar'd to read it
 ' Before myself, on my insulted throne
 ' His idle pageant plac'd—Oh, words are weak
 ' To paint the pangs, the rage, the indignation,
 ' That whirl'd from thought to thought my soul in tem-
 ' Now on the point to burst, and now by shame [pest,
 ' Repress'd—But in the face of Sicily,
 ' All mad with acclamation, what, Rodolpho,
 ' What could I do ? The sole relief that rose
 ' To my distracted mind, was to adjourn
 ' Th' assembly till to-morrow—But to-morrow
 ' What can be done ?—Oh, it avails not what !
 ' I care not what is done—My only care
 ' Is how to clear my faith to Sigismunda.
 ' She thinks me false ! She cast a look that kill'd me !
 ' Oh ! I am base in Sigismunda's eye !
 ' The lowest of mankind, the most perfidious !
 ' *Rod.* This was a strain of insolence indeed,
 ' A daring outrage of so strange a nature
 ' As stuns me quite——
 ' *Tan.* Curs'd be my timid prudence,
 ' That dash'd not back, that moment in his face,
 ' The bold presumptuous lie !—and curs'd this hand,
 ' That from a start of poor dissimulation,
 ' Led off my Sigismunda's hated rival,
 ' Ah, then ! what, poison'd by the false appearance,
 ' What, Sigismunda, were thy thoughts of me ?
 ' How, in the silent bitterness of soul,

' How

* How didst thou scorn me ! hate mankind, thyself,
 * For trusting to the vows of faithless Tancred ?
 * For such I seem'd---I was---the thought distracts me ?
 * I should have cast a flattering world aside,
 * Rush'd from my throne, before them all avow'd her,
 * The choice, the glory of my free-born heart
 * And spurn'd the shameful fetters thrown upon it---
 * Instead of that---confusion !---what I did
 * Has clinch'd the chain, confirm'd Siffredi's crime,
 * And fix'd me down to infamy !

* *Rod.* My lord,

* Blame not the conduct which your situation
 * Tore from your tortur'd heart---What could you do ?
 * Had you, so circumstanc'd, in open senate,
 * Before th' astonish'd public, with no friends
 * Prepar'd, no party form'd, affronted thus,
 * The haughty princess and her powerful faction,
 * Supported by this will, the sudden stroke,
 * Abrupt and premature, might have recoil'd
 * Upon yourself, even your own friends revolted,
 * And turn'd at once the public scale against you.
 * Besides, consider, had you then detected
 * In its fresh guilt this action of Siffredi,
 * You must with signal vengeance have chastis'd
 * The treasonable deed---Nothing so mean
 * As weak insulted power that dares not punish.
 * And how would that have suited with your love ;
 * His daughter present too ? Trust me, your conduct,
 * Howe'er abhorrent to a heart like yours,
 * Was fortunate and wise---Not that I mean
 * E'er to advise submission-----

* *Tan.* Heavens ! submission !

* Could I descend to bear it, even in thought,
 * Despise me, you, the world, and Sigismunda !
 * Submission !---No !---To-morrow's glorious light
 * Shall flash discovery on the scene of baseness.
 * Whatever be the risque, by Heavens, to-morrow,
 * I will o'erturn the dirty lie-built schemes
 * Of these old men, and shew my faithful senate,
 * That Manfred's son knows to assert and wear,
 * With undiminish'd dignity, that crown
 * This unexpected day has plac'd upon him.'

But

36 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

But this, my friend, ' these stormy gusts of pride
 ' Are foreign to my love——Till Sigismunda
 ' Be disabus'd, my breast is tumult all,
 ' And can obey no settled course of reason.
 ' I see her still, I feel her powerful image,
 ' That look, where with reproach complaint was mix'd,
 ' Big with soft woe, and gentle indignation,
 ' Which seem'd at once to pity and to scorn me——
 ' Oh, let me find her ! I too long have left
 ' My Sigismunda to converse with tears,
 ' A prey to thoughts that picture me a villain.
 ' But ah ! how, clogg'd with this accursed state,
 ' A tedious world, shall I now find access ?
 ' Her father too---Ten thousand horrors crowd
 ' Into the wild, fantastic eye of love——
 ' Who knows what he may do ? Come then, my friend,
 ' And by thy sister's hand, Oh, let me steal
 ' A letter to her bosom---I no longer
 ' Can bear her absence, by the just contempt
 ' She now must brand me with, inflam'd to madness.
 ' Fly, my Rodolpho, fly ! engage thy sister
 ' To aid my letter.' *This black, unheard-of outrage,*
I cannot now impart——'Till Sigismunda
Be disabus'd, my breast is tumult all.
Come, then, my friend, and by the hand of Laura,
Oh, let me steal a letter to her bosom,
And this 'very' evening
 Secure an interview---I would not bear
 This rack another day, not for my kingdom.
 ' Till then, deep plung'd in solitude and shades,
 ' I will not see the hated face of man.'
 Thought drives on thought, on passions passions roll ;
 Her smiles alone can calm my raging soul.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT

A C T III.

SCENE, *a chamber.*

Sigismunda alone, sitting in a disconsolate posture.

A H, tyrant prince ! ah, more than faithless Tancred !
 Ungenerous and inhuman in thy falshood !
 Hadst thou, this morning, when my hopeless heart,
 Submissive to my fortune and my duty,
 Had so much spirit left, as to be willing
 To give thee back thy vows, ah ! hadst thou then
 Confess'd the sad necessity thy state
 Impos'd upon thee, and with gentle friendship,
 Since we must part at last, our parting soften'd ;
 I should indeed---I should have been unhappy,
 But not to this extreme---' Amidst my grief,
 ' I had, with pensive pleasure, cherish'd still
 ' The sweet remembrance of thy former love,
 ' Thy image still had dwelt upon my soul,
 ' And made our guiltless woes not undelightful.
 ' But coolly thus---How couldst thou be so cruel ?---
 ' Thus to revive my hopes, to sooth my love
 ' And call forth all its tenderness, then sink me
 ' In black despair---What unrelenting pride
 ' Possess'd thy breast, that thou couldst bear unmov'd
 ' To see me bent beneath a weight of shame ?
 ' Pangs thou canst never feel ! How couldst thou drag me,
 ' In barbarous triumph at a rival's car ?
 ' How ! make me witness to a sight of horror ?
 ' That hand, which, but a few short hours ago,
 ' So wantonly abus'd my simple faith,
 ' Before th' attesting world given to another,
 ' Irrevocably given !---There was a time,
 ' When the least cloud that hung upon my brow,
 ' Perhaps imagin'd only, touch'd thy pity.
 ' Then, brighten'd often by the ready tear,
 ' Thy looks were softness all ; then the quick heart,
 ' In every nerve alive, forgot itself,
 ' And for each other then we felt alone.
 ' But now, alas ! those tender days are fled ;
 ' Now thou canst see me wretched, pierc'd with anguish,
 ' With studied anguish of thy own creating,

D

' Nor

38 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

' Nor wet thy harden'd eye---Hold, let me think---
 ' I wrong thee sure; thou canst not be so base,
 ' As meanly in my misery to triumph ---
 ' What is it then?---'Tis fickleness of nature,
 ' 'Tis sickly love extinguish'd by ambition---'
 Is there, kind heaven, no constancy in man?
 No steadfast truth, no generous fix'd affection,
 That can bear up against a selfish world?
 No, there is none---Even Tancred is inconstant!

[*Rising.*

Hence! let me fly this scene!---Whate'er I see,
 These roofs, these walls, each object that surrounds me,
 Are tainted with his vows---But whither fly?
 The groves are worse, the soft retreat of Belmont,
 Its deepening glooms, gay lawns, and airy summits,
 Will wound my busy memory to torture,
 And all its shades will whisper---faithless Tancred!---
 My father comes---How, sunk in this disorder,
 Shall I sustain his presence?

Enter Siffredi.

Sif. Sigismunda,
 My dearest child! I grieve to find thee thus
 A prey to tears. ' I know the powerful cause
 ' From which they flow, and therefore can excuse them;
 ' But not their wilful obstinate continuance.
 ' Come, rouse thee then, call up thy drooping spirit,'
 Awake to reason from this dream of love,
 And shew the world thou art Siffredi's daughter.

Sig. Alas! I am unworthy of that name.

Sif. Thou art indeed to blame; thou hast too rashly
 Engag'd thy heart, without a father's sanction.
 But this I can forgive. ' The king has virtues,
 ' That plead thy full excuse; nor was I void
 ' Of blame, to trust thee to those dangerous virtues.
 ' Then dread not my reproaches. 'Tho' he blames,
 ' Thy tender father pities more than blames thee.
 ' Thou art my daughter still;' and, if thy heart
 Will now resume its pride, assert itself,
 And greatly rise superior to this trial,
 I to my warmest confidence again
 Will take thee, and esteem thee more my daughter.

Sig. Oh, you are gentler far than I deserve!
 It is, it ever was, my darling pride,

To

To bend my soul to your supreme commands,
 Your wisest will ; and tho' by love betray'd—
 Alas ! and punish'd too---I have transgress'd
 The nicest bounds of duty, yet I feel
 A sentiment of tenderness, a source
 Of filial nature springing in my breast,
 That should it kill me, shall controul this passion,
 And make me all submission and obedience
 To you my honoured lord, the best of fathers.

Sif. Come to my arms, thou comfort of my age !
 Thou only joy and hope of these grey hairs !
 Come, let me take thee to a parent's heart ;
 There, with the kindly aid of my advice,
 Even with the dew of these paternal tears,
 Revive and nourish this becoming spirit—
 Then thou dost promise me, my Sigismunda—
 Thy father stoops to make it his request—
 Thou wilt resign thy fond presumptuous hopes,
 And henceforth never more indulge one thought
 That in the light of love regards the king ?

Sig. Hopes I have none !—Those by this fatal day
 Are blasted all—But from my soul to banish
 While weeping memory there retains her seat,
 Thoughts which the purest bosom might have cherish'd,
 Once my delight, now even in anguish charming,
 Is more, alas ! my lord, than I can promise.

Sif. Absence and time, the softener of our passions,
 Will conquer this. Mean time, I hope from thee
 A generous great effort ; that thou wilt now
 Exert thy utmost force, nor languish thus
 Beneath the vain extravagance of love.
 Let not thy father blush to hear it said,
 His daughter was so weak, e'er to admit
 A thought so void of reason, that a king
 Should to his rank, his honour and his glory,
 The high important duties of a throne,
 Even to his throne itself, madly prefer
 A wild romantic passion, the fond child
 Of youthful dreaming thought and vacant hours ;
 That he should quit his heaven-appointed station,
 Desert his awful charge, the care of all
 ' The toiling millions which this isle contains ;

' Nay more, should plunge them into war and ruin
 ' And all to soothe a sick imagination,
 ' A miserable weakness'—*What* must for thee,
 To make thee blest, Sicilia be unhappy?
 ' The king himself, lost to the nobler sense
 ' Of manly praise, become the piteous hero
 ' Of some soft tale, and rush on sure destruction?
 ' Canst thou, my daughter, let the monstrous thought
 ' Possess one moment thy perverted fancy?
 Rouse thee, for shame! and if a spark of virtue
 Lies slumbering in thy soul, bid it blaze forth;
 Nor sink unequal to the glorious lesson,
 This day thy lover gave thee from his throne.

Sig. Ah, that was not from virtue!—Had, my father,
 That been his aim, I yield to what you say;
 ' 'Tis powerful truth, unanswerable reason.
 ' Then, then, with sad but dutious resignation,
 ' I had submitted as became your daughter;
 ' But in that moment, when my humbled hopes
 ' Were to my duty reconcil'd, to raise them
 ' To yet a fonder height than e'er they knew,
 ' Then rudely dash them down---There is the sting!
 ' The blasting view is ever present to me---'

Why did you drag me to a fight so cruel?

Sif. It was a scene to fire thy emulation.

Sig. It was a scene of perfidy!---But know,
 I will do more than imitate the king---
 For he is false!---I, though sincerely pierc'd
 With the best, truest passion, ever touch'd,
 A virgin's breast, here vow to heaven and you,
 Though from my heart I cannot, from my hopes
 To cast this prince---What would you more, my father?

Sif. Yes, one thing more---thy father then is happy---
 ' Though by the voice of innocence and virtue
 ' Absolv'd, we live not to ourselves alone:
 ' A rigorous world, with peremptory sway,
 ' Subjects us all, and even the noblest most.
 This world from thee, my honour and thy own,
 Demands one step; a step, by which, convinc'd,
 The king may see thy heart disdains to wear
 A chain which his has greatly thrown aside,
 ' 'Tis fitting too, thy sex's pride commands thee,

' To

' To shew th' approving world thou can'st resign,
 ' As well as he, nor with inferior spirit,
 ' A passion fatal to the public weal.'
 But above all, thou must root out for ever
 From the king's breast the least remain of hope,
 And henceforth make his mentioned love dishonour.
 These things, my daughter, that must needs be done,
 Can but this way be done--by the safe refuge,
 The sacred shelter of a husband's arms.
 And there is one---

Sig. Good heavens ! what means my lord ?

Sis. One of illustrious family, high rank,
 Yet still of higher dignity and merit,
 Who can and will protect thee ; one to awe
 The king himself---Nay, hear me, Sigismunda---
 The noble Osmond courts thee for his bride,
 And has my plighted word --This day---

Sig. [*Kneeling.*] My father !

Let me with trembling arms embrace thy knees !

Oh, if you ever wish to see me happy ;

If e'er in infant years I gave you joy,

When, as I prattling twin'd around your neck,

You snatch'd me to your bosom, kiss'd my eyes,

And melting said you saw my mother there ;

Oh, save me from that worst severity

Of fate ! Oh, outrage not my breaking heart

To that degree !---I cannot !---'tis impossible !---

So soon withdraw it, give it to another---

' Hear me, my dearest father ; hear the voice

' Of nature and humanity, that plead

' As well as justice for me !---Not to chuse

' Without your wise direction may be duty ;

' But still my choice is free---That is a right,

' Which even the lowest slave can never lose.

' And would you thus degrade me ? make me base ?

' For such it were to give my worthless person

' Without my heart, an injury to Osmond,

' The highest can be done'---Let me, my lord---

Or I shall die, shall, by the sudden change,

Be to distraction shock'd---Let me wear out

My hapless days in solitude and silence,

Far from the malice of a prying world ;

42 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

At least—you cannot sure refuse me this—
Give me a little time---I will do all,
All I can do, to please you!---' Oh, your eye
' Sheds a kind beam---'

Sif. My daughter! you abuse
The softness of my nature—

Sig. Here, my father,
Till you relent, here will I grow for ever!

Sif. Rise, Sigismunda.--- Though you touch my heart,
Nothing can shake th' inexorable dictates
Of honour, duty, and determin'd reason.
Then by the holy ties of filial love,
Resolve, I charge thee, to receive earl Osmond,
As suits the man who is thy father's choice,
And worthy of thy hand---I go to bring him---

Sig. Spare me, my dearest father!

Sif. [*Afide.*] I must rush
From her soft grasp, or nature will betray me!
' Oh, grant us, heaven! that fortitude of mind,
' Which listens to our duty, not our passions---
Quit me, my child!

Sig. You cannot, Oh, my father!
You cannot leave me thus!

Sif. Come hither, Laura,
Come to thy friend. Now shew thyself a friend.
Combat her weakness; dissipate her tears;
Cherish, and reconcile her to her duty. [*Exit Sif.*

Enter Laura.

Sig. Oh, woe on woe! distress'd by love and duty!
Oh, every way unhappy Sigismunda!

Lau. Forgive me, Madam, if I blame your grief.
How can you waste your tears on one so false?
Unworthy of your tenderness? to whom
Nought but contempt is due and indignation?

Sig. You know not half the horrors of my fate!
I might perhaps have learn'd to scorn his falshood;
Nay, when the first sad burst of tears was past,
I might have ~~rous'd~~ my pride and scorn'd himself—
But 'tis too much, this greatest last misfortune---
Oh, whither shall I fly? Where hide me, Laura,
From the dire scene my father now prepares?

Lau. What thus alarms you, Madam?

Sig.

Sig. Can it be?

Can I — ah, no! — at once give to another
My violated heart? in one wild moment?

He brings earl Osmond to receive my vows.

Oh, dreadful change! for Tancred, haughty Osmond.

Lau. Now, on my soul, 'tis what an outrag'd heart
Like yours, should wish! — I should, by heavens,
esteem it

Most exquisite revenge!

Sig. Revenge! on whom?

On my own heart, already but too wretched!

Lau. On him! this Tancred! who has basely sold,
For the dull form of despicable grandeur,
His faith, his love! — At once a slave and tyrant!

Sig. Oh, rail at me, at my believing folly,
My vain ill-founded hopes, but spare him, Laura.

Lau. Who rais'd these hopes? who triumphs o'er that
weakness?

Pardon the word — You greatly merit him;
Better than him, with all his giddy pomp;
You rais'd him by your smiles when he was nothing.
Where is your woman's pride, that guardian spirit
Given us to dash the perfidy of man?

Ye powers! I cannot bear the thought with patience —

' Yet recent from the most unsparing vows

' The tongue of love e'er lavish'd; from your hopes

' So vainly, idly, cruelly deluded;'

Before the public thus, before your father,

By an irrevocable solemn deed,

With such inhuman scorn, to throw you from him;

To give his faithless hand yet warm from thine,

With complicated meanness, to Constantia.

And, to complete his crime, when thy weak limbs

Could scarce support thee, then, of thee regardless,

To lead her off.

Sig. That was indeed a fight

To poison love; to turn it into rage

And keen contempt. — What means this stupid weakness

That hangs upon me? Hence, unworthy tears!

Disgrace my cheek no more! No more, my heart,

For one so coolly false or meanly fickle —

' Oh, it imports not which' — dare to suggest

44 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

The least excuse!---Yes, traitor, I will wring
Thy pride, will turn thy triumph to confusion!

' I will not pine away my days for thee,
' Sighing to brooks and groves; while, with vain pity,
' You in a rival's arms lament my fate—
' No, let me perish! ere I tamely be
' That soft, that patient, gentle Sigismunda,
' Who can console her with the wretched boast,
' She was for thee unhappy!—If I am,
' I will be nobly so!'—Sicilia's daughters
Shall wondering see in me a great example
Of one who punish'd an ill-judging heart,
Who made it bow to what it most abhorr'd!
Crush'd it to misery! for having thus
So lightly listen'd to a worthless lover!

Lau. At last it mounts, the kindling pride of virtue;
Trust me, thy marriage will embitter his—

Sig. Oh, may the furies light his nuptial torch!
Be it accurs'd as mine! for the fair peace,
The tender joys of hymeneal love,
May jealousy awak'd, and fell remorse,
Pour all their fiercest venom through his breast!---
Where the fates lead, and blind revenge, I follow.—
Let me not think—By injur'd love! I vow,
Thou shalt, base prince! perfidious and inhuman!
That shalt behold me in another's arms;
In his thou hatest! Osmond's!

Lau. ' That will grind
' His heart with secret rage;' Ay, that will sting
His soul to madness; ' set him up a terror,
' A spectacle of woe to faithless lovers!'—
Your cooler thought, besides, will of the change
Approve, and think it happy. Noble Osmond
' From the same stock with him derives his birth,
' First of Sicilian barons, prudent, brave,
' Of strictest honour, and by all rever'd—'

Sig. Talk not of Osmond, but perfidious Tancred!
Rail at him, rail! invent new names of scorn!
Assist me, Laura; lend my rage fresh fuel;
Support my staggering purpose, which already
Begins to fail me---Ah, my vaunts how vain!
How have I ly'd to my own heart!—Alas,

My

My tears return, the mighty flood o'erwhelms me!

' Ten thousand crowding images distract

' My tortur'd thought—And is it come to this?

' Our hopes, our vows, our oft repeated wishes,

' Breath'd from this fervent soul, and full of heaven,

' To make each other happy—come to this !'

Lau. If thy own peace and honour cannot keep
Thy resolution fix'd, yet, Sigismunda,
Oh, think, how deeply, how beyond retreat,
Thy father is engag'd.

Sig. Ah, wretched weakness !

That thus enthrals my soul, ' that chafes thence

' Each nobler thought, the sense of every duty ;'

And have I then no tears for thee, my father ?

Can I forget thy cares, from helpless years,

Thy tenderness for me ? ' an eye still beam'd

' With love ; a brow that never knew a frown ;

' Nor a harsh word thy tongue ?' Shall I for these

Repay thy stooping venerable age,

With shame, disquiet, anguish, and dishonour ?

It must not be !---Thou first of angels ! come,

Sweet filial piety, and firm my breast !

Yes, let one daughter to her fate submit,

Be nobly wretched---but her father happy !---

Laura !---they come !---Oh, heavens, I cannot stand

The horrid trial !---Open, open earth !

And hide me from their view.

Lau. Madam.

Enter Siffredi and Osmond.

Sif. My daughter,

Behold my noble friend who courts thy hand,

And whom to call my son I shall be proud ;

' Nor shall I less be pleas'd in his alliance,

' To see thee happy.'

Os. Think not, I presume,

Madam, on this your father's kind consent,

To make me blest. I love you from a heart,

That seeks your good superior to my own ;

And will by every art of tender friendship,

Consult your dearest welfare. May I hope,

Yours does not disavow your father's choice ?

Sig.

Sig. I am a daughter, Sir---and have no power
O'er my own heart---I die---Support me, Laura. [*Faints.*]

Sif. Help---Bear her off---She breathes---my daughter!

Sig. Oh,

Forgive my weakness---soft---my Laura, lead me---

To my apartment.

[*Exeunt Sig. and Laura.*]

Sif. Pardon me, my lord,

If by this sudden accident alarm'd,

I leave you for a moment.

[*Exit Sif.*]

Ofm. Let me think---

What can this mean?---Is it to me aversion?

Or is it, as I fear'd, she loves another?

Ha!---yes---perhaps the king, the young count Tancred;

They were bred up together---Surely that,

That cannot be---Has he not given his hand,

In the most solemn manner, to Constantia?

Does not his crown depend upon the deed?

• No---if they lov'd, and this old statesman knew it,

• He could not to a king prefer a subject.

• His virtues I esteem---nay more, I trust them---

• So far as virtue goes-- but could he place

• His daughter on the throne of Sicily---

• Oh, tis a glorious bribe, too much for man!

What is it then?---I care not what it be.

• My honour now, my dignity demands,

• That my propos'd alliance, by her father,

• And even herself accepted, be not scorn'd.

• I love her too---I never knew till now

• To what a pitch I love her. Oh, she shot

• Ten thousand charms into my inmost soul!

• She look'd so mild, so amiably gentle,

• She bow'd her head, she glow'd with such confusion,

• Such loveliness of modesty! She is,

• In gracious mind, in manners, and in person,

• The perfect model of all female beauty!

She must be mine---She is!---If yet her heart

Consents not to my happiness, her duty,

Join'd to my tender cares, will gain so much

Upon her generous nature---That will follow.

The man of of sense, who acts a prudent part,

Not flattering steals, but forms himself the heart. [*Exit.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT

A C T IV.

SCENE, *the Garden belonging to Siffredi's House.**Enter Sigismunda and Laura.*SIGISMUNDA, *with a letter in her hand.*

'TIS done!—I am a slave!—The fatal vow
Has pass'd my lips!—Methought in those sad
moments,

The tombs around, the faints, the darken'd altar,
And all the trembling shrines with horror shook.
But here is still new matter of distress.

Oh, Tancred, cease to persecute me more!

Oh, grudge me not some calmer state of woe;

Some quiet gloom to shade my hopeless days,

Where I may never hear of love and thee!—

Has Laura too, conspir'd against my peace?

Why did you take this letter?—Bear it back—

I will not court new pain.

[*Giving her the letter.*]

Lau. Madam, Rodolpho

Urg'd me so much, nay, even with tears conjur'd me,

But this once more to serve th' unhappy king—

For such he said he was—that tho' enrag'd,

Equal with thee, at his inhuman falsehood,

I could not to my brother's fervent prayers

Refuse this office—Read it—His excuses

Will only more expose his falsehood.

Sig. No:

It suits not Osmond's wife to read one line

From that contagious hand—she knows too well!

Lau. He paints him out distress'd beyond expression,

Even on the point of madness. 'Wild as winds,

'And fighting seas, he raves. His passions mix,

'With ceaseless rage, all in each giddy moment.'

He dies to see you, and to clear his faith.

Sig. Save me from that!—That would be worse than

Lau. I but report my brother's words; who then [all]

Began to talk of some dark imposition,

That had deceiv'd us all; when, interrupted,

We heard your father and earl Osmond near,

As summon'd to Constantia's court they went.

Sig.

Sig. Ha! imposition?—Well, if I am doom'd
To be, o'er all my sex, the wretch of love,
In vain I would resist—Give me the letter—
To know the worst is some relief—Alas,
It was not thus, with such dire palpitations,
That, Tancred, once I us'd to read thy letters.

[*Attempting to read the letter, but gives it to Laura.*
Ah, fond remembrance blinds me!—Read it, Laura.

Lau. [*Reads.*] “Deliver me, Sigismunda, from that
most exquisite misery which a faithful heart can suffer—
To be thought base by her, from whose esteem even
virtue borrows new charms. When I submitted to my
cruel situation, it was not falsehood you beheld, but an
excess of love. Rather than endanger that, I for a
while gave up my honour. Every moment till I see you
stabs me with severer pangs than real guilt itself can feel.
Let me then conjure you to meet me in the garden,
towards the close of the day, when I will explain this
mystery. We have been most inhumanly abused; and
that by the means of the very paper which I gave you,
from the warmest sincerity of love, to assure to you the
heart and hand of
TANCRED.”

Sig. There, Laura, there, the dreadful secret sprung!
That paper! ah, that paper! it suggests
A thousand horrid thoughts—I to my father
Gave it; and he perhaps---I dare not cast
A look that way—If yet indeed you love me,
Oh, blast me not, kind Tancred, with the truth!
Oh, pitying keep me ignorant for ever.
What strange peculiar misery is mine?

Reduc'd to wish the man I love were false?

‘Why was I hurry’d to a step so rash?

‘Repairless woe!--I might have waited, sure,

‘A few short hours---No duty that forbade---

‘I ow’d thy love that justice; till this day

‘Thy love an image of all-perfect goodness!

‘A beam from heav’n that glow’d with every virtue!

‘And have I thrown this prize of life away?

‘The piteous wreck of one distracted moment?

‘Ah, the cold prudence of remorseless age;

‘Ah, parents, traitors to your children’s bliss;

‘Ah,

‘ Ah, curs’d, ah, blind revenge!---On every hand

‘ I was betray’d---You, Laura, too, betray’d me!

‘ *Lau.* Who, who, but he, whate’er he writes, betray’d you?

‘ Or false or pusillanimous. For once,

‘ I will with you suppose, that his agreement

‘ To the king’s will was forg’d---Tho’ forg’d by whom?

‘ Your father scorns the crime---Yet what avails it?

‘ This, if it clears his truth, condemns his spirit.

‘ A youthful king, by love and honour fir’d,

‘ Patient to sit on his insulted throne,

‘ And let an outrage, of so high nature,

‘ Unpunish’d pass, uncheck’d, uncontradicted---

‘ Oh, ’tis a meanness equal ev’n to falsehood.

‘ *Sig.* Laura, no more---We have already judg’d

‘ Too largely without knowledge. Oft, what seems

‘ A trifle, a meer nothing, by itself,

‘ In some nice situations turns the scale

‘ Of fate, and rules the most important actions.

‘ Yes, I begin to feel a sad preface;

‘ I am undone, from that eternal source

‘ Of human woes---the judgment of the passions.

‘ But what have I to do with these excuses?

‘ Oh, cease, my treacherous heart, to give them room!

‘ It suits not thee to plead a lover’s cause:

‘ Even to lament my fate is now dishonour.

‘ Nought now remains, but with relentless purpose,

‘ To shun all interviews, all clearing up

‘ Of this dark scene; to wrap myself in gloom,

‘ In solitude and shades; there to devour

‘ The silent sorrows ever swelling here;

‘ And since I must be wretched--for I must--

‘ To claim the mighty misery myself,

‘ Engross it all, and spare a hapless father.

‘ Hence, let me fly!--The hour approaches---

Lau. Madam,

Behold he comes---the king---

Sig. Heavens! how escape?

No---I will stay---This one last meeting---Leave me.

[*Exit* Laura.]

E

Enter

50 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

Enter Tancred.

Tan. And are these long, long hours of torture past?
My life! my Sigismunda!

[Throwing himself at her feet.

Sig. Rise, my lord.

To see my sovereign thus no more becomes me.

Tan. Oh, let me kiss the ground on which you tread!
Let me exhale my soul in softest transport!
Since I again behold my Sigismunda!

[Rising.

Unkind! how couldst thou ever deem me false?

How thus dishonour love?---' Oh, I could much

' Embitter my complaint!---How low were then

' Thy thoughts of me? How didst thou then affront

' The human heart itself?' After the vows,

The fervent truth, the tender protestations,

Which mine has often pour'd, to let thy breast,

Whate'er th' appearance was, admit suspicion?

Sig. How! when I heard myself your full consent
To the late king's so just and prudent will?

Heard it before you read, in solemn senate?

When I beheld you give your royal hand,

To her, whose birth and dignity of right

Demands that high alliance? Yes, my lord,

You have done well. The man whom Heaven appoints

To govern others, should himself first learn

To bend his passions to the sway of reason.

In all, you have done well; but when you bid

My humbled eyes look up to you again,

And sooth'd with wanton cruelty my weakness---

That too was well---My vanity deserv'd

The sharp rebuke, ' whose fond extravagance

' Could ever dream to balance your repose,

' Your glory, and the welfare of a people.'

Tan. Chide on, chide on. Thy soft reproaches now

Instead of wounding, only sooth my fondness.

No, no, thou charming consort of my soul!

I never lov'd thee with such faithful ardour,

As in that cruel miserable moment

You thought me false; ' when even my honour stoop'd

' To wear for thee a baffled face of baseness.'

It was thy barbarous father, Sigismunda,

Who caught me in the toil. He turn'd that paper,

Meant

Meant for th' assuring bond of nuptial love,
To ruin it for ever ; he, he wrote
That forg'd consent, you heard, beneath my name,
' Nay, dar'd before my outrag'd throne to read it !'
Had he not been thy father — Ha ! my love !
You tremble, you grow pale !

Sig. Oh, leave me, Tancred !

Tan. No !—Leave thee ?—Never ! never ! till you set
My heart at peace, till these dear lips again
Pronounce thee mine ! Without thee, I renounce
Myself, my friends, the world—Here on this hand——

Sig. My lord, forget that hand, which never now
Can be to thine united——

Tan. Sigismunda !

What dost thou mean ?—Thy words, thy look, thy man-
ner,

Seem to conceal some horrid secret—Heavens !——
No—That was wild—Distraction fires the thought !——

Sig. Enquire no more — I never can be thine.

Tan. What, who shall interpose ? Who dares attempt
To brave the fury of an injur'd king,
Who, ere he sees thee ravish'd from his hopes,
Will wrap all blazing Sicily in flames ?——

Sig. In vain your power, my lord——'Tis fatal error,
Join'd to my father's unrelenting will,
Has plac'd an everlasting bar betwixt us——
I am——earl Osmond's——wife.

Tan. Earl Osmond's wife !——

[*After a long pause, during which they look at one another
with the highest agitation, and most tender distress.*

Heavens ! did I hear thee right ? What ! marry'd ?
Lost to thy faithful Tancred ? lost for ever ! [marry'd !
Couldst thou then doom me to such matchless woe,
Without so much as hearing me ?---Distraction !——
Alas ! what hast thou done ? Ah, Sigismunda !

Thy rash credulity has done a deed,
Which, of two happiest lovers that e'er felt
The blissful power, has made two finish'd wretches !
But---Madness !---Sure, thou know'st it cannot be !
This hand is mine ! a thousand thousand vows——

Enter Osmond.

Osmond. [*Snatching her hand from the king.*] Madam,
this hand, by the most solemn rites,

A little hour ago, was given to me,
And did not sovereign honour now command me,
Never but with my life to quit my claim,
I would renounce it——thus!

Tan. Ha! who art thou?

Presumptuous man!

Sig. [*Aside.*] Where is my father? Heavens! [*Goes out.*]

Ofm. One thou shouldst better know---Yes---view me,
Who can and will maintain his rights and honour, [one
Against a faithless prince, an upstart king,
Whose first base deed is what a harden'd tyrant
Would blush to act.

Tan. Insolent Osmond! know,
This upstart king will hurl confusion on thee,
And all who shall invade his sacred rights,
Prior to thine---Thine, founded on compulsion,
On infamous deceit, 'while his proceed
'From mutual love, and free long-plighted faith.
'She is, and shall be mine!'---I will anaul,
By the high power with which the laws invest me,
'Those guilty forms in which you have entrap'd,
'Bafely entrap'd, to thy detested nuptials,'
My queen betroth'd, who has my heart, my hand,
And shall partake my throne---If, haughty lord,
If this thou didst not know, then know it now;
And know, besides, as I have told thee this,
Shouldst thou but think to urge thy treason further---
'Than treason more! treason against my love?'---
Thy life shall answer for it.

Ofm. Ha! my life!-----

It moves my scorn to hear thy empty threats,
When was it that a Norman baron's life
Became so vile, as on the frown of kings
To hang?---Of that, my lord, the law must judge:
Or if the law be weak, my guardian sword-----

Tan. Dare not to touch it, traitor, lest my rage
Break loose, and do a deed that misbecomes me.

Enter Siffredi.

Siff. My gracious lord, what is it I behold!
My sovereign in contention with his subjects?
Surely this house deserves from royal Tancred
A little more regard, than to be made

A scene

A scene of trouble, and unseemly jars.

‘ It grieves my soul, it baffles every hope,

‘ It makes me sick of life, to see thy glory

‘ Thus blasted in the bud.’---Heavens ! can your highness

From your exalted character descend,

‘ The dignity of virtue ; and, instead

‘ Of being the protector of our rights,

‘ The holy guardian of domestic bliss,’

Unkindly thus disturb the sweet repose,

The secret peace of families, for which

Alone the free-born race of man to laws

And government submitted ?

Tan. My lord Siffredi,

Spare thy rebuke. The duties of my station

Are not to me unknown. But thou, old man,

Dost thou not blush to talk of rights invaded ;

And of our best, our dearest bliss disturb’d ?

Thou, who with more than barbarous perfidy

Hast trampled all allegiance, justice, truth,

Humanity itself beneath thy feet ?

Thou know’st thou hast---I could, to thy confusion,

Return thy hard reproaches ; but I spare thee

Before this lord, for whose ill-sorted friendship

Thou hast most basely sacrific’d thy daughter.

Farewel, my lord.---For thee, lord conitable,

Who dost presume to lift thy surly eye

To my soft love, my gentle Sigismunda,

I once again command thee, on thy life-----

Yes---chew thy rage---but mark me---on thy life,

No further urge thy arrogant pretensions ! [*Exit Tan.*]

Ofm. Ha ! Arrogant pretensions ! Heaven and earth !

What ! arrogant pretensions to my wife ?

My wedded wife ! Where are we ? In a land

Of civil rule, of liberty and laws ?---

Not, on my life, pursue them ? ---Giddy prince !

My life disdains thy nod. It is the gift

Of parent Heaven, who gave me too an arm,

A spirit to defend it against tyrants.

‘ The Norman race, the sons of mighty Rolló,

‘ Who rushing in a tempest from the north,

‘ Great nurse of generous freemen, bravely won

‘ With their own swords their seats, and still possess them

' By the same noble tenure, are not us'd
 ' To hear such language——If I now desist,
 ' Then brand me for a coward ! deem me villain !
 ' A traitor to the public ! By this conduct
 ' Deceiv'd, betray'd, insulted, tyranniz'd.
 Mine is a common cause. My arm shall guard,
 Mix'd with my own, the rights of each Sicilian,
 ' Of social life, and of mankind in general.'
 Ere to thy tyrant rage they fall a prey,
 I shall find means to shake thy tottering throne,
 ' Which this illegal, this perfidious usage
 ' Forfeits at once,' and crush thee in the ruins !——
 Constantia is my queen !

Siff. Lord constable,
 Let us be steadfast in the right ; but let us
 Act with cool prudence, and with manly temper,
 As well as manly firmness. ' True, I own,
 ' Th' indignities you suffer are so high,
 ' As might even justify what now you threaten.
 ' But if, my lord, we can prevent the woes,
 ' The cruel horrors of intestine war,
 ' Yet hold untouch'd our liberties and laws ;
 ' Oh, let us, rais'd above the turbid sphere
 ' Of little selfish passions, nobly do it !
 ' Nor to our hot, intemperate pride, pour out
 ' A dire libation of Sicilian blood.
 ' 'Tis godlike magnanimity to keep,
 ' When most provok'd, our reason calm and clear,
 ' And execute her will, from a strong sense
 ' Of what is right, without the vulgar aid
 ' Of heat and passion, which, tho' honest, bear us
 ' Often too far.' Remember that my house
 Protects my daughter still ; and ere I saw her
 Thus ravish'd from us, by the arm of power,
 This hand should act the Roman father's part.
 Fear not ; be temperate ; all will yet be well.
 I know the king. ' At first his passions burst
 ' Quick as the lightning's flash ; but in his breast
 ' Honour and justice dwell'——Trust me, to reason
 He will return.

O/m. He will !—By Heavens, he shall !——
 You know the king—I wish, my lord Siffredi,

That you had deign'd to tell me all you knew—
 And would you have me wait, with duteous patience,
 Till he return to reason? Ye just Powers!
 When he has planted on our necks his foot,
 And trod us into slaves; when his vain pride
 Is cloy'd with our submission; 'if, at last,
 'He finds his arm too weak to shake the frame;
 'Of wide-establish'd order out of joint,
 'And overturn all justice; then, perchance,
 'He, in a fit of sickly kind repentance,
 'May make a merit to return to reason.'
 No, no, my lord! there is a nobler way,
 To teach the blind oppressive Fury reason:
 Oft has the lustre of avenging steel
 Unseal'd her stupid eyes—The sword is reason!

Enter Rodolpho with Guards.

Rod. My lord high constable of Sicily,
 In the king's name, and by his special order,
 I here arrest you prisoner of state.

Osm. What king? I know no king of Sicily,
 Unless he be the husband of Constanza.

Rod. Then know him now—Behold his royal orders
 To bear you to the castle of Palermo.

Siff. Let the big torrent foam its madness off.
 Submit, my lord—No castle long can hold
 Our wrongs—This, more than friendship or alliance,
 Confirms me thine; this binds me to thy fortunes,
 By the strong tie of common injury,
 Which nothing can dissolve—I grieve, Rodolpho,
 To see the reign in such unhappy sort
 Begin.

Osm. The reign! the usurpation call it!
 This meteor king may blaze a while, but soon
 Must spend his idle terrors—Sir, lead on—
 Farewel, my lord—More than my life and fortune,
 Remember well, is in your hands—my honour!

Siff. Our honour is the same. My son, farewel—
 We shall not long be parted. On these eyes
 Sleep shall not shed his balm, till I behold thee
 Restor'd to freedom, or partake thy bonds.

Even noble courage is not void of blame,
 Till nobler patience sanctifies its flame.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V.

SCENE, *a chamber.**Siffredi, alone.*

THE prospect lowers around. I found the king,
 Tho' calm'd a little, with subsiding tempest,
 As suits his generous nature, yet in love
 Abated nought, most ardent in his purpose;
 Inexorably fix'd, whate'er the risque,
 To claim my daughter, and dissolve this marriage——
 I have embark'd; upon a perilous sea,
 A mighty treasure. ' Here the rapid youth,
 ' Th' impetuous passions of a lover-king,
 ' Check my bold purpose; and there, the jealous pride,
 ' Th' impatient honour of a haughty lord,
 ' Of the first rank, in interest and dependants
 ' Near equal to the king, forbid retreat.
 ' My honour too, the same unchang'd conviction,
 ' That these my measures were, and still remain,
 ' Of absolute necessity to save
 ' The land from civil fury, urge me on.
 ' Bat how proceed?——I only faster rush.
 ' Upon the desperate evils I would shun.
 ' Whate'er the motive be, deceit, I fear,
 ' And harsh unnatural force, are not the means
 ' Of public welfare, or of private bliss'——
 Bear witness, Heaven! Thou mind-inspecting eye!
 My breast is pure. I have prefer'd my duty,
 The good and safety of my fellow-subjects,
 To all those views that fire the selfish race
 Of mortal men, and mix them in eternal broils.

Enter an Officer belonging to Siffredi.

Off. My lord, a man of noble port, his face
 Wrap'd in disguise, is earnest for admission.

Siff. Go, bid him enter—— *[Officer goes out.]*
 Ha! wrap'd in disguise!

And at this late unseasonable hour!

' When o'er the world tremendous midnight reigns,
 ' By the dire gloom of raging tempest doubled——

Who can it be?

Enter

Enter Osmond discovering himself.

Siff. 'What! ha!' earl Osmond, you?—Welcome, once more,

To this glad roof!—But why in this disguise?
Would I could hope the king exceeds his promise!
I have his faith, soon as to-morrow's sun
Shall gild Sicilia's cliffs, you shall be free.—
Has some good angel turn'd his heart to justice?

Ofm. It is not by the favour of count Tancred
That I am here. As much I scorn his favour,
As I defy his tyranny and threats—
Our friend Goffredo, who commands the castle,
On my parole, ere dawn, to render back
My person, has permitted me this freedom.
Know then; the faithless outrage of to-day,
By him committed whom you call the king,
Has rous'd Constantia's court. Our friends, the friends
Of virtue, justice, and of public faith,
Ripe for revolt, are in high ferment all.

' This, this, they say, exceeds what'er deform'd
' The miserable days we saw beneath
' William the Bad. This saps the solid base,
' At once, of government and private life;
' This shameless imposition on the faith,
' The majesty of senates, this lewd insult,
' This violation of the rights of men,
' Added to these, his ignominious treatment
' Of her, th' illustrious offspring of our kings,
' Sicilia's hope, and now our royal mistress.
' You know, my lord, how grossly these infringe
' The late king's will, which orders, if count Tancred
' Make not Constantia partner of his throne,
' That he be quite excluded the succession,
' And she to Henry given, king of the Romans,
' The potent emperor Barbarossa's son,
' Who seeks with earnest instance her alliance.'

I thence of you, as guardian of the laws,
As guardian of this will, to you entrusted,
Desire, nay more, demand your instant aid,
To see it put in vigorous execution.

Siff. You cannot doubt, my lord, of my concurrence.
Who, more than I, have labour'd this great point?

'Tis

'Tis my own plan ; and if I drop it now,
 I should be justly branded with the shame
 Of rash advice, or despicable weakness.
 But let us not precipitate the matter.
 Constantia's friends are numerous and strong ;
 Yet Tancred's, trust me, are of equal force.
 E'er since the secret of his birth was known,
 The people all are in a tumult hurl'd,
 Of boundless joy, ' to hear there lives a prince
 ' Of mighty Guiscard's line. Numbers, besides,
 ' Of powerful barons, who at heart had pin'd,
 ' To see the reign of their renown'd forefathers,
 ' Won by immortal deeds of matchless valour,
 ' Pass from the gallant Normans to the Suevi,
 ' Will with a kind of rage espouse his cause——
 ' 'Tis so, my lord——be not by passion blinded——
 ' 'Tis surely so'——Oh, if our prating virtue
 Dwells not in words alone——Oh, let us join,
 My generous Osmond, to avert these woes,
 And yet sustain our tottering Norman kingdom !

Os. But how, Siffredi, how ?——If by soft means
 We can maintain our rights, and save our country,
 May his unnatural blood first stain the sword,
 Who with unpitying fury first shall draw it !

Siff. I have a thought——The glorious work be thine.
 ' But it requires an awful flight of virtue,
 ' Above the passions of the vulgar breast,
 ' And thence from thee I hope it, noble Osmond——'
 Suppose my daughter, to her God devoted,
 Were plac'd within some convent's sacred verge,
 Beneath the dread protection of the altar——

Os. Ere then, by Heavens ! I would ' devoutly shave
 ' My holy scalp,' turn whining monk myself,
 And pray incessant for the tyrant's safety.——
 What ! How ! because an insolent invader,
 A sacrilegious tyrant, ' in contempt
 ' Of all those noblest rights, which to maintain
 ' Is man's peculiar pride,' demands my wife ;
 ' That I shall thus betray the common cause
 ' Of human kind.'

*What ! shall I tamely yield her up,
 Even in the manner you propose ?——Oh, then*

I were

I were supremely vile! degraded! sham'd!
The scorn of manhood! and abhorr'd of honour!

Siff. There is, my lord, an honour, the calm child
Of reason, of humanity and mercy,
Superior far to this punctilious demon,
That singly minds itself, and oft embroils
With proud barbarian niceties the world.

Ofm. My lord, my lord, I cannot break your prudence;
It holds a pulse unequal to my blood —
Unblemish'd honour is the flower of virtue!
The vivifying soul! and he who slights it,
Will leave the other dull and lifeless dross.

Siff. No more——You are too warm.

Ofm. You are too cool.

Siff. Too cool, my lord? I were indeed too cool,
Not to resent this language, and to tell thee——
I wish earl Osmond were as cool as I
To his own selfish bliss—ay, and as warm
To that of others——But of this no more——
My daughter is thy wife——I gave her to thee,
And will, against all force, maintain her thine.
But think not I will catch thy headlong passions,
Whirl'd in a blaze of madness o'er the land;
Or, till the last extremity compel me,
Risqué the dire means of war——The king, to-morrow,
Will set you free; and, if by gentle means
He does not yield my daughter to your arms,
And wed Constantia, as the will requires,
Why then expect me on the side of justice——
Let that suffice.

Ofm. It does——Forgive my heat.

My rankled mind, by injuries inflam'd,
May be too prompt to take, and give offence. [port

Siff. 'Tis past—Your wrongs, I own, may well trans-
The wisest mind——But henceforth, noble Osmond,
Do me more justice, honour more my truth,
Nor mark me with an eye of squint suspicion——

' These jars apart—You may repose your soul
' On my firm faith, and unremitting friendship.
' Of that I sure have given exalted proof,
' And the next sun we see shall prove it further.'——
Return, my son, and from your friend Goffredo

Release

60 TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

Release your word. There try, by soft repose,
To calm your breast.

Os. Bid the vext ocean sleep,
Swept by the pinions of the raging north——
But your frail age, by care and toil exhausted,
Demands the balm of all-repairing rest.

Siff. Soon as to-morrow's dawn shall streak the skies,
I, with my friends in solemn state assembled,
Will to the palace, and demand your freedom,
Then by calm reason, or by higher means,
The king shall quit his claim, and in the face
Of Sicily, my daughter shall be yours.
Farewel.

Os. My lord, good night. [Exit Siffredi.]

Os. [After a long pause.] I like him not——
Yes—I have mighty matter of suspicion.

'Tis plain. I see it lurking in his breast,
'He has a foolish fondness for this king'——
My honour is not safe, while here my wife
Remain——Who knows but he this very night
May bear her to some convent, as he mention'd——
The king too——tho' I smother'd up my rage,
I mark'd it well——will set me free to-morrow.
Why not to-night? He has some dark design——
By Heavens, he has!—I am abus'd most grossly;
Made the vile tool of this old statesman's schemes;
'Marry'd to one—ay, and he knew it—-one
'Who loves young Tancred! Hence her swooning tears,
'And all her soft distress, when she disgrac'd me,
'By basely giving her perfidious hand
'Without her heart---Hell and perdition! this,
'This is the perfidy!---This is the fell,
'The keen, envenom'd, exquisite disgrace,
'Which, to a man of honour, even exceeds
'The falshood of the person---But I now
'Will rouse me from the poor tame lethargy,
'By my believing fondness cast upon me.'
I will not wait his crawling timid motions,
'Perhaps to blind me meant, which he to-morrow
'Has promis'd to pursue. No! ere his eyes
'Shall open on to-morrow's orient beam,'
I will convince him that earl Osmond never

Was

Was form'd to be his dupe---' I know full well
 ' Th' important weight and danger of the deed :
 ' But to a man, whom greater dangers press,
 ' Driven to the brink of infamy and horror,
 ' Rashness itself, and utter desperation,
 ' Are the best prudence.'---I will bear her off
 This night, and lodge her in a place of safety
 I have a trusty band that waits not far.
 Hence! let me lose no time---One rapid moment
 Should ardent form, at once, and execute
 A bold design---'Tis fix'd---'Tis done!---Yes, then,
 ' When I have seiz'd the prize of love and honour,
 ' And with a friend secur'd her, to the castle
 ' I will repair, and claim Goffredo's promise
 ' To rise with all his garrison---My friends
 ' With brave impatience wait.' The mine is laid,
 And only wants my kindling touch to spring. [*Ex. Osm.*]

S C E N E, Sigismunda's apartment.

[*Thunder.*]

Enter Sigismunda and Laura.

Lau. Heavens! 'tis a fearful night!

Sig. Ah! the black rage
 Of midnight tempest, or th' assuring smiles
 Of radiant morn, are equal all to me.
 Nought now has charms or terrors to my breast,
 The feat of stupid woe!---Leave me, my Laura.
 Kind rest, perhaps, may hush my woes a little---
 Oh, for that quiet sleep that knows no morning!

Lau. Madam, indeed I know not how to go.
 Indulge my fondness---Let me watch a while
 By your sad bed, till these dread hours shall pass.

Sig. Alas! what is the toil of elements, [*Thunder.*]
 This idle perturbation of the sky,
 To what I feel within?---Oh, that the fires
 Of pitying Heaven would point their fury here!
 Good night, my dearest Laura.

Lau. Oh, I know not
 What this oppression means---But 'tis with pain,
 With tears, I can persuade myself to leave you ---
 Well then---Good night, my dearest Sigismunda. [*Exit.*]

Sig. And am I then alone?---The most undone,

F

Most

Most wretched being now beneath the cope
 Of this affrighting gloom that wraps the world——
 I said I did not fear—Ah, me! I feel
 A shivering horror run thro' all my powers!
 Oh, I am nought but tumult, fears and weakness!
 And yet how idle fear when hope is gone,
 Gone, gone for ever!—Oh, thou gentle scene

[*Looking towards her bed.*]

Of sweet repose, where by th' oblivious draught
 Of each sad toilsome day, to peace restor'd,
 Unhappy mortals lose their woes awhile,
 Thou hast no peace for me!—What shall I do?
 How pass this dreadful night, so big with terror?—
 Here, with the midnight shades, here will I sit,

[*Sitting down.*]

A prey to dire despair, and ceaseless weep
 The hours away—Bless me—I heard a noise——

[*Starting up.*]

No—I mistook—Nothing but silence reigns
 And awful midnight round—Again!—Oh, Heavens!
 My lord the king!

Enter Tancred.

Tan. Be not alarm'd, my love!

Sig. My royal lord, why at this midnight hour,
 How came you hither?

Tan. By that secret way
 My love contriv'd, when we, in happier days,
 Us'd to devote these hours, so much in vain,
 To vows of love and everlasting friendship.

Sig. Why will you thus persist to add new stings
 To her distress, who never can be thine?

Oh, fly me! fly! you know——

Tan. I know too much.

Oh, how I could reproach thee, Sigismunda!
 Pour out my injur'd soul in just complaints!
 But now the time permits not, these swift moments——
 I told thee how thy father's artifice
 Forc'd me to seem perfidious in thy eyes.

' Ah, fatal blindness! not to have observ'd
 ' The mingled pangs of rage and love that shook me:
 ' When by my cruel public situation
 ' Compell'd, I only feign'd consent, to gain
 ' A little time, and more secure thee mine.'

E'er

E'er since---a dreadful interval of care,
 My thoughts have been employ'd, not without hope,
 How to defeat Siffredi's barbarous purpose.
 But thy credulity has ruin'd all,
 Thy rash, thy wild---I know not what to name it---
 Oh, it has prov'd the giddy hopes of man
 To be delusion all, and sickening folly!

Sig. Ah, generous Tancred! ah, thy truth destroys me!
 Yes, yes, 'tis I, 'tis I alone am false!
 My hasty rage, join'd to my tame submission,
 More than the most exalted filial duty
 Could e'er demand, has dash'd our cup of fate
 With bitterness unequal'd---But, alas!
 What are thy woes to mine?---to mine! just Heaven!
 Now is thy turn of vengeance---hate, renounce me!
 Oh, leave me to the fate I well deserve,
 To sink in hopeless misery!--at least,
 Try to forget the worthless Sigismunda!

Tan. Forget thee! No! Thou art my soul itself!
 I have no thought, no hope, no wish but thee!
 • Even this repented injury, the fears,
 • That rouse me all to madness, at the thought
 • Of losing thee, the whole collected pains
 • Of my full heart, serve but to make thee dearer.
 Ah, hew, forget thee!--Much must be forgot,
 Ere Tancred can forget his Sigismunda!

Sig. But you, my lord, must make that great effort.

Tan. Can Sigismunda make it?

Sig. Ah, I know not
 With what success---But all that feeble woman
 And love-entangled reason can perform,
 I, to the utmost, will exert to do it.

• *Tan.* Fear not---'Tis done!--If thou canst form the
 thought,
 • Success is sure---I am forgot already.
 • *Sig.* Ah, Tancred!--But, my lord, respect me more.
 • Think who I am---What can you now propose?
 • *Tan.* To claim the plighted vows which heaven has
 heard,
 • To vindicate the rights of holy love
 • By faith and honour bound, to which compar'd
 • These empty forms, which have ensnar'd thy hand,

' Are impious guile, abuse, and profanation —
 ' Nay, as a king, whose high prerogative
 ' By this unlicens'd marriage is affronted,
 ' To bid the laws themselves pronounce it void.
 ' *Sig.* Honour, my lord, is much too proud to catch
 ' At every slender twig of nice distinctions.
 ' These for th' unfeeling vulgar may do well :
 ' But those, whose souls are by the nicer rule
 ' Of virtuous delicacy nobly sway'd,
 ' Stand at another bar than that of laws.
 ' Then cease to urge me---Since I am not born
 ' To that exalted fate to be your queen——
 ' Or, yet a dearer name——to be your wife!——
 ' I am the wife of an illustrious lord
 ' Of your own princely blood ; and what I am,
 ' I will with proper dignity remain.
 ' Retire, my royal lord---There is no means
 ' To cure the wounds this fatal day has given.
 ' We meet no more !'

Tan. Oh, barbarous Sigismunda !
 And canst thou talk thus steadily ? thus treat me
 With such un pitying, unrelenting rigour ?
 Poor is the love, that rather than give up
 A little pride, a little formal pride,
 The breath of vanity, can bear to see
 The man, whose heart was once so dear to thine,
 By many a tender vow so mix'd together,
 A prey to anguish, fury and distraction !
 Thou canst not surely make me such a wretch,
 Thou canst not, Sigismunda !--Yet relent,
 Oh, save us yet !---Rodolpho, with my guards,
 Waits in the garden---Let us seize the moments
 We ne'er may have again—With more than power
 I will assert thee mine, with fairest honour.
 The world shall even approve ; each honest bosom
 Swell'd with a kindred joy to see us happy.

Sig. The world approve ! What is the world to me ?
 The conscious mind is its own awful world.——
And mine is fix'd---Distress me then no more ;
Not all the heart can plead, (and it, alas,
Pleads but too much)

' And yet, perhaps, if thou wert not a king,

' I know

" I know not, Tancred, what I might have done,
 " Then, then, my conduct, sanctity'd by love,
 " Could not be deem'd, by the severest judge,
 " The mean effect of interest or ambition.
 " But now not all my partial heart can plead,
 Shall ever shake th' unalterable dictates
 That tyrannize my breast.

Tan. 'Tis well --No more---

I yield me to my fate---Yes, yes inhuman!
 Since thy barbarian heart is steel'd by pride,
 Shut up to love and pity, here behold me
 Cast on the ground, a vile and abject wretch!
 Lost to all cares, all dignities, all duties!
 Here will I grow, breathe out my faithful soul,
 Here at thy feet---Death; death alone shall part us!

Sig. Have you then vow'd to drive me to perdition?
 What can I more?---Yes, Tancred! once again
 I will forget the dignity my station
 Commands me to sustain---for the last time
 Will tell thee, that, I fear, no ties, no duty,
 Can ever root thee from my hapless bosom.
 Oh, leave me! fly me! were it but in pity!--
 To see what once we tenderly have lov'd,
 Cut off from every hope--cut off for ever!
 Is pain thy generosity should spare me.
 Then rise, my lord; and if you truly love me;
 If you respect my honour; nay, my peace,
 Retire! for though th' emotions of my heart
 Can ne'er alarm my virtue; yet, alas!
 They tear it so, they pierce it with such anguish---
 Oh, 'tis too much!--I cannot bear the conflict!

Enter Osmond.

Of. Turn, tyrant, turn! and answer to my honour,
 For this thy base insufferable outrage!

Tan. Insolent traitor! think not to escape
 Thyself my vengeance! [*They fight. Osmond falls.*]

Sig. Help, here! Help!--Oh, heavens!

[*Throwing herself down by him.*]

Alas, my lord, what meant your headlong rage?
 That faith, which I this day, upon the altar,
 To you devoted, is unblemish'd, pure

As vestal truth ; was resolutely yours,
Beyond the power of aught on earth to shake it.

Of. Perfidious woman ! die !—— [*Shortening his sword, he plunges it into her breast.*] and to the grave
Attend a husband, yet but half aveng'd !

Tan. Oh, horror ! horror ! execrable villain !

Of. And, tyrant ! thou !---Thou shalt not o'er my tomb
Exult---'Tis well---'Tis great !---I die content !---[*Dies.*

Enter Rodolpho, and Laura.

Tan. [*Throwing himself down by Sigismunda.*] Quick !
here ! bring aid !---' All in Palermo bring
' Whose skill can save her !'---Ah, that gentle bosom
Pours fast the streams of life.

Sig. All aid is vain,
I feel the powerful hand of death upon me---
But, Oh ! it sheds a sweetness through my fate,
That I am thine again ; and without blame
May in my Tancred's arms resign my soul !

Tan. Oh, death is in that voice ! so gently mild,
So sadly sweet, as mixes even with mine
The tears of hovering angels !---Mine again !——
And is it thus the cruel fates have join'd us ?
Are these the horrid nuptials they prepare
For love like ours ?---' Is virtue thus rewarded ?
' Let not my impious rage accuse just heav'n !
' Thou, Tancred, thou, hast murdered Sigismunda !
' That furious man was but the tool of fate,
' I, I, the cause !---But I will do thee justice
' On this deaf heart ! that to thy tender wisdom
' Refus'd an ear---Yes, death shall soon unite us.

Sig. Live, live, my Tancred !---Let my death suffice
To expiate all that may have been amiss.
May it appease the fates, avert their fury
From thy propitious reign ! ' Mean time, of me
' And of thy glory mindful, live, I charge thee,
' To guard our friends, and make thy people happy---'

Enter Siffredi fix'd in astonishment and grief.

My father !——Oh, how shall I lift my eyes
To thee, my sinking father !

Sif. Awful heaven !
I am chastis'd——My dearest child !——

Sig.

Sig. Where am I ?

A fearful darkness closes all around—
 My friends ! We needs must part---I must obey
 Th' impetuous call—Farewel, my Laura ! ' cherish
 ' My poor afflicted father's age---Rodolpho,
 ' Now is the time to watch th' unhappy king,
 ' With all the care and tenderness of friendship.'——
 Oh, my dear father, bow'd beneath the weight
 Of age and grief---the victim even of virtue,
 Receive my last adieu !---Where art thou, Tancred ?
 Give me thy hand---But, ah,---it cannot save me
 From the dire king of terrors, whose cold power
 Creeps o'er my heart——Oh !

Tan. How these pangs distract me !
 Oh, lift thy gracious eyes ;——Thou leav'st me then !
 Thou leav'st me, Sigismunda !

Sig. ' Yet a moment——
 ' I had, my Tancred, something more to say——
 ' Yes——but thy love and tenderness for me,
 ' Sure makes it needless---Harbour no resentment
 ' Against my father ; venerate his zeal,
 ' That acted from a principle of goodness,
 ' From faithful love to thee---Live, and maintain
 ' My innocence imbalm'd, with holiest care
 ' Preserve my spotless memory !' Oh——I die——
 Eternal Mercy take my trembling soul !
 Oh, 'tis the only sting of death to part
 From those we love---from thee---farewel, my Tancred !

[Dies.

Tan. Thus then !

[Flying to his sword, is held by Rodolpho.

Rod. Hold, hold, my lord !---Have you forgot
 Your Sigismunda's last request already ?

Tan. Off ! set me free ! Think not to bind me down,
 With barbarous friendship, to the rack of life !
 What hand can shut the thousand thousand gates,
 Which death still opens to the woes of mortals ?---
 ' I shall find means---No power in earth or heaven
 ' Can force me to endure the hateful light,
 ' Thus robb'd of all that lent it joy and sweetness !'
 Off, traitors, off ! or my distracted soul

Will

Will burst indignant from this jail of nature,
 To where she beckons yonder---No, mild seraph;
 Point not to life---I cannot linger here,
 Cut off from thee, the miserable pity,
 The scorn of human kind!---A trampled king!
 'Who let his mean poor-hearted love, one moment,
 'To coward prudence stoop; who made it not
 'The first undoubting action of his reign,
 'To snatch thee to his throne, and there to shield thee,
 'Thy helpless bosom, from a ruffian's fury!'---
 Oh, shame! Oh, agony! Oh, the fell stings
 Of late, of vain repentance!---Ha, my brain
 Is all on fire! a wild abyss of thought!
 Th' infernal world discloses! See! behold him!
 Lo! with fierce smiles he shakes the bloody steel,
 And mocks my feeble tears.---Hence, quickly, hence!!
 Spurn his vile carcass! give it to the dogs!
 Expose it to the winds and screaming ravens!
 'Or hurl it down that fiery sleep to hell,
 'There with his soul to toss in flames for ever.'
 Ah, impotence of rage!

Rod. *Preserve him, heaven!*

Tan. What am I? Where?

Sad, silent, all?---The forms of dumb despair,
 Around some mournful tomb.---What do I see?
 This soft abode of innocence and love
 Turn'd to the house of death! a place of horror!---
 Ah, that poor corpse! pale! pale! deform'd with murder!
 Is that my Sigismunda? [*Throws himself down by her.*]

Sis. [*After a pathetic pause, looking on the scene before
 him.*] Have I liv'd

To these enfeebled years, by heaven reserv'd;
 To be a dreadful monument of justice?---
 Rodolpho, raise the king, and bear him hence
 From this distracting scene of blood and death.
 'Alas, I dare not give him my assistance;
 'My care would only more enflame his rage.
 'Behold the fatal work of my dark hand,
 'That by rude force the passions would command,
 'That ruthless sought to root them from the breast;
 'They may be rul'd, but will not be oppress.'

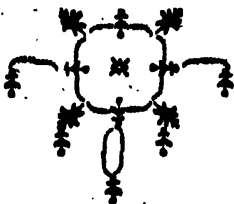
Taught

TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

69

Taught hence, ye parents, who from nature stray,
And the great ties of social life betray;
Ne'er with your children act a tyrant's part :
'Tis yours to guide, not violate the heart.
Ye vainly wise, who o'er mankind prebide,
Behold my righteous woes, and drop your pride;
Keep virtue's simple path before your eyes,
Nor think from evil good can ever rise.

END of the FIFTH ACT.



E P I L O G U E.

CRAMM'D to the throat with wholesome moral stuff.

Alas, poor audience! you have had enough.

Was ever hapless heroine of a play

In such a piteous plight as ours to-day?

Was ever woman so by love betray'd?

Match'd with two husbands, and yet—die a maid.

But bless me!—hold—what sounds are these I hear!—

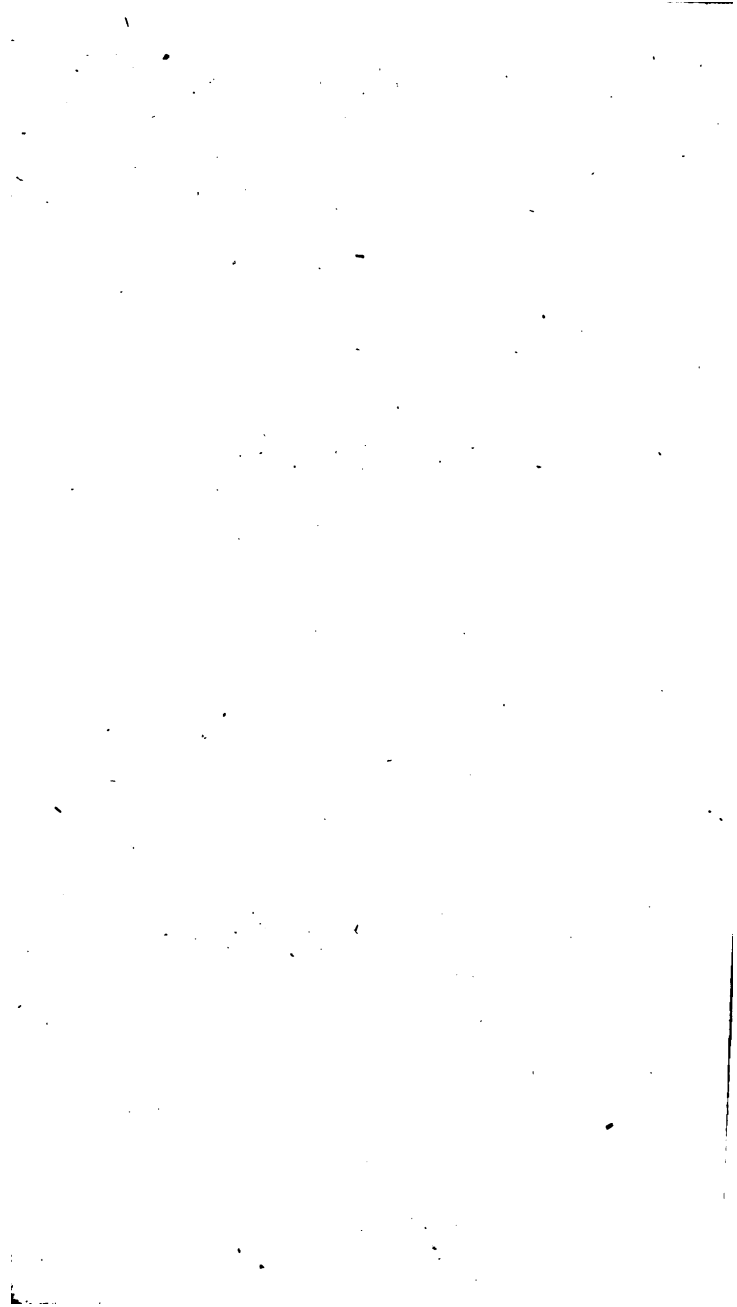
I see the Tragic Muse herself appear.

The back-scene opens, and discovers a romantic Sylvan landscape; from which the Tragic Muse advances slowly to music, and speaks the following lines:

*Hence with your slipshod epilogue, that tries
To wipe the virtuous tear from British eyes;
That dares my moral, tragic scene profane,
With strains—at best, unsuited, light and vain.
Hence from the pure unsully'd beams that play
In yon fair eyes where virtue shines---Away!*

*Britons, to you from hasty Castalian groves,
Where dwell the tender, oft unhappy loves;
Where shades of heroes roam, each mighty name,
And court my aid to rise again to fame;
To you I come, to freedom's noblest feat,
And in Britannia fix my last retreat.*

*In Greece and Rome, I watch'd the public weal;
The purple tyrant trembled at my steel:
Nor did I less o'er private sorrows reign,
And mend the melting heart with softer pain.
On France and You then rose my brightning star,
With social ray---The arts are ne'er at war.
Oh, as your fire and genius stronger blaze,
As yours are generous freedom's bolder lays,
Let not the Gallic taste leave yours behind;
In decent manners and in life refin'd;
Banish the motley mode, to tag low verse,
The laughing ballad to the mournful verse.
When thro' five acts your hearts have learn'd to glow,
Touch'd with the sacred force of honest woe;
Oh, keep the dear impression on your breast,
Nor idly lose it for a wretched jest.*





J. Roberts del.

Published for Balls Bridge Theatre Sept 26 1776.

M. WROUGHTON in the Character of BARNWELL.

*Barnwell Where can I hide me, whether shall I fly to avoid
the Swift unerring hand of Justice?*

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES.

THE SECOND VOLUME.

LONDON, Printed by J. Streater, at the

Sign of the Anchor, in St. Dunstons Church-yard,

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LONDON, at York.

MDCCLXXVI.

*J. Roberts del.**Published for Diller Wright Theatre Sept 26th 1776.*

M. WROUGHTON in the Character of BARNWELL

Barnwell Where can I hide me, whether shall I fly to avoid the Swift unerring hand of Justice?

BELL'S EDITION.

THE
LONDON MERCHANT;
OR, THE HISTORY OF
GEORGE BARNWELL.

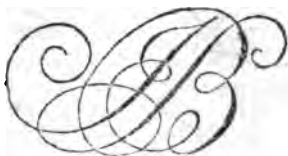
A TRAGEDY,
Written by Mr. LILLO.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

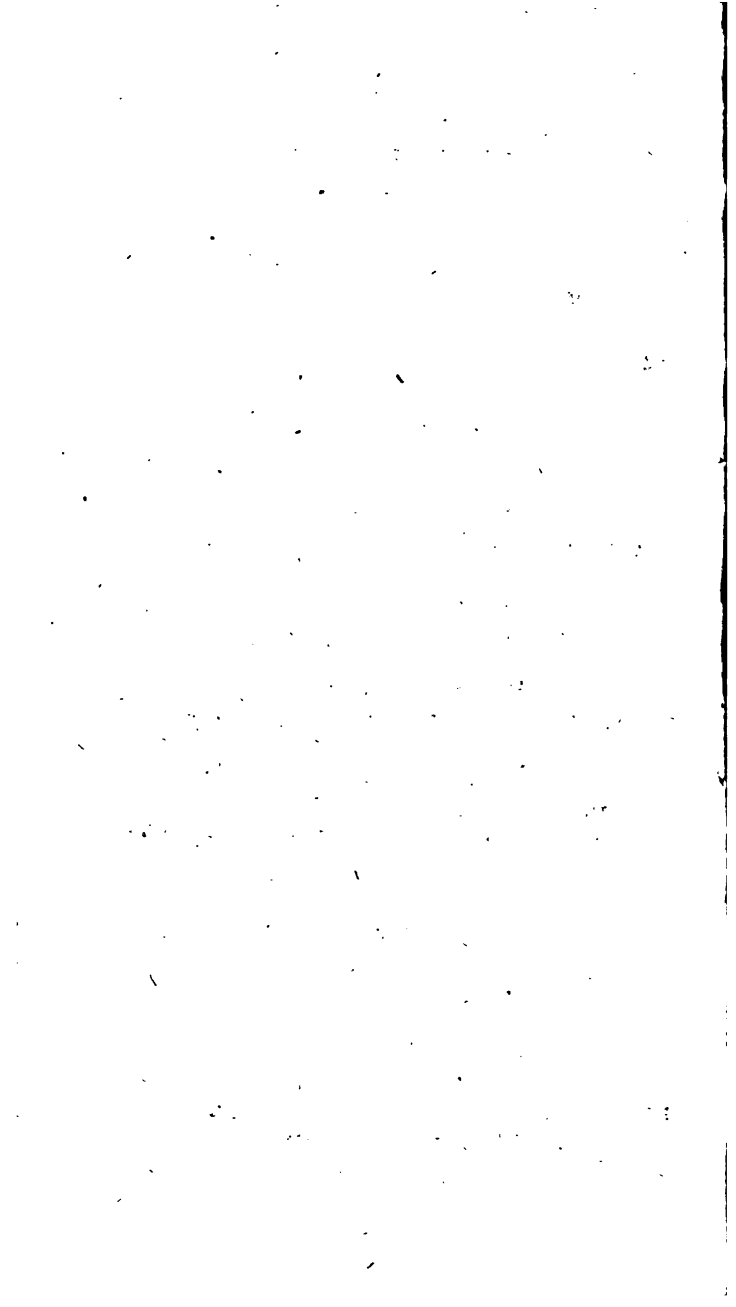
Regulated from the Prompt-Book,
By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,
By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

*Learn to be wise by others harm,
And you shall do full well.* Old Ballad of the Lady's Fall.



L O N D O N :
Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCLXXVI.



T O

SIR JOHN EYLES, BART.

Member of Parliament for, and Alderman of the
City of LONDON, and Sub-Governor of the
SOUTH-SEA Company.

SIR,

IF tragic poetry be, as Mr. Dryden has somewhere said,
the most excellent and most useful kind of writing;
the more extensively useful the moral of any tragedy is,
the more excellent that piece must be of its kind.

I hope I shall not be thought to insinuate, that this,
to which I have presumed to prefix your name, is such:
that depends on its fitness to answer the end of tragedy,
the exciting of the passions, in order to the correcting
such of them as are criminal, either in their nature, or
through their excess. Whether the following scenes do
this in any tolerable degree, is, with the deference that
becomes one who would not be thought vain, submitted
to your candour and impartial judgment.

What I would infer is this, I think, evident truth;
that tragedy is so far from losing its dignity by being ac-
commodated to the circumstances of the generality of
mankind, that it is more truly august, in proportion to the
extent of its influence, and the numbers that are properly
affected by it: as it is more truly great to be the in-
strument of good to many who stand in need of our as-
sistance, than to a very small part of that number.

If princes, &c. were alone liable to misfortunes arising
from vice or weakness in themselves or others, there

A. 2.

would

would be good reason for confining the characters in tragedy to those of superior rank ; but since the contrary is evident, nothing can be more reasonable than to proportion the remedy to the disease.

I am far from denying, that tragedies founded on any instructive and extraordinary events in history, or well-invented fables, where the persons introduced are of the highest rank, are without their use, even to the bulk of the audience. The strong contrast between a Tamerlane and a Bajazet may have its weight with an unsteady people, and contribute to the fixing of them in the interest of a prince of the character of the former ; when thro' their own levity, or the arts of designing men, they are rendered factious and uneasy, though they have the highest reason to be satisfied. The sentiments and example of a Cato may inspire his spectators with a just sense of the value of liberty, when they see that honest patriot prefer death to an obligation from a tyrant, who would sacrifice the constitution of his country, and the liberties of mankind, to his ambition or revenge. I have attempted, indeed, to enlarge the province of the graver kind of poetry, and should be glad to see it carried on by some abler hand. Plays founded on moral tales in private life may be of admirable use, by carrying conviction to the mind with such irresistible force as to engage all the faculties and powers of the soul in the cause of virtue, by stifling vice in its first principles. They who imagine this to be too much to be attributed to tragedy, must be strangers to the energy of that noble species of poetry. Shakespeare, who has given such amazing proofs of his genius, in that as well as in comedy, in his Hamlet has the following lines :

*Had he the motive and the cause for passion
That I have, he would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the gen'ral ear with horrid speech ;
Make mad the guilty, and appall the free,
Confound the ign'rant, and amaze indeed
The very faculty of eyes and ears.*

And farther, in the same Speech :

*I've heard that guilty creatures at a play
Have, by the very cunning of the scene,
Been so struck to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions.*

Prodigious! yet strictly just. But I shall not take up your valuable time with my remarks: only give me leave just to observe, that he seems so firmly persuaded of the power of a well-written piece to produce the effect here ascribed to it, as to make Hamlet venture his soul on the event, and rather trust that, than a messenger from the other world, tho' it assumed, as he expresses it, his *noble Father's form*, and assured him, that it was his *Spirit*. *I'll have,* says Hamlet, *grounds more relative;*

———*the play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.*

Such plays are the best answers to them who deny the lawfulness of the stage.

Considering the novelty of this attempt, I thought it would be expected from me to say something in its excuse; and I was unwilling to lose the opportunity of saying something of the usefulness of tragedy in general, and what may be reasonably expected from the farther improvement of this excellent kind of poetry.

S I R;

I hope you will not think I have said too much of an art, a mean specimen of which I am ambitious enough to recommend to your favour and protection. A mind, conscious of superior worth, as much despises flattery, as it is above it. Had I found in myself an inclination to so contemptible a vice, I should not have chosen Sir JOHN EYLES for my patron. And indeed the best written panegyrick, tho' strictly true, must place you in a light much inferior to that in which you have long been fixed by the love and esteem of your fellow citizens, whose choice of you for one of their representatives in parliament, has sufficiently declared their sense of your merit, Nor hath the knowledge of your worth been confined to the city: the proprietors in the South-Sea company, in

which are included numbers of persons as considerable for their rank, fortune, and understanding, as any in the kingdom, gave the greatest proof of their confidence in your capacity and probity, by choosing you sub-governor of their company, at a time when their affairs were in the utmost confusion, and their properties in the greatest danger. Neither is the court insensible of your importance. I shall not, therefore, attempt a character so well known, nor pretend to add any thing to a reputation so well established.

Whatever others may think of a dedication, wherein there is so much said of other things, and so little of the person to whom it is addressed, I have reason to believe that you will the more easily pardon it upon that very account.

I am,

S I R,

Your most obedient,

Humble servant,

GEORGE LILLO.

P R O-

P R O L O G U E.

THE tragic muse, sublime, delights to show
 Princes distress'd, and scenes of royal woe;
 In awful pomp, majestic, to relate
 The fall of nations, or some hero's fate;
 That scepter'd chiefs may, by example, know
 The strange vicissitudes of things below;
 What dangers on security attend;
 How pride and cruelty in ruin end:
 Hence Providence supreme, to know, and own
 Humanity adds glory to a throne.
 In ev'ry former age, and foreign tongue,
 With native grandeur thus the goddess sung.
 Upon our stage, indeed, with wish'd success,
 You've sometimes seen her in an humbler dress;
 Great only in distress, when she complains
 In Southern's, Rowe's, or Otway's moving strains,
 The brilliant drops that fall from each bright eye,
 The absent pomp, with brighter gems supply.
 Forgive us, then, if we attempt to show,
 In artless strains, a tale of private woe.
 A London 'Prentice ruin'd is our theme,
 Drawn from the fam'd old song that bears his name.
 We hope your taste is not so high to scorn
 A moral tale esteem'd ere you were born;
 Which for a century of rolling years,
 Has fill'd a thousand thousand eyes with tears.
 If thoughtless youth to warn, and shame the age
 From vice destructive, well becomes the stage;
 If this example innocence insure,
 Prevent our guilt, or by reflection cure;
 If Milkwood's dreadful crimes, and sad despair,
 Commend the virtue of the good and fair;
 Tho' art be wanting, and our numbers fail,
 Indulge th' attempt, in justice to the tale.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

	Drury-Lane.	Covent-Garden..
<i>Thoroughgood,</i>	Mr. Hurst.	Mr. Hull.
<i>Barnwell, uncle to</i>		
<i>George,</i>	Mr. Wroughton.	Mr. Fearon.
<i>George Barnwell,</i>	Mr. Brereton.	Mr. Wroughton..
<i>Trueman,</i>	Mr. Davies.	Mr. Young.
<i>Blunt.</i>	Mr. Whitefield.	Mr. Thompson..

W O M E N.

<i>Maria,</i>	Miss Hopkins.	Mrs. Bulkley.
<i>Milkwood,</i>	Mrs. Hopkins.	Mrs. Mattocks.
<i>Lucy,</i>	Mrs. Davies,	Mrs. Green.

Officers with their attendants, keeper, and footmen.

S C E N E, London, and an adjacent village.

T H E

GEORGE BARNWELL.

* * The lines distinguished by inverted comas are omitted in the Representation, and those printed in Italics are the additions of the Theatre.

A C T I.

SCENE, *a room in Thorowgood's house.**Enter Thorowgood and Trueman.*

TRUEMAN.

SIR, the packet from Genoa is arriv'd. [*Gives letters.*]
Thor. Heaven be prais'd! The storm that threatened our royal mistress, pure religion, liberty, and laws, is for a time diverted. The haughty and revengeful Spaniard, disappointed of the loan on which he depended from Genoa, must now attend the slow returns of wealth from his new world, to supply his empty coffers, ere he can execute his propos'd invasion of our happy island. By this means, time is gain'd to make such preparations on our part, as may, heav'n concurring, prevent his malice, or turn the meditated mischief on himself.

Tr. He must be insensible indeed, who is not affected when the safety of his country is concerned. Sir, may I know by what means? — If I am too bold —

Thor. Your curiosity is laudable; and I gratify it with the greater pleasure, because from thence you may learn, how honest merchants, as such, may sometimes contribute to the safety of their country, as they do at all times to its happiness; that if hereafter you should be tempted to any action that has the appearance of vice

or

or meanness in it, upon reflecting on the dignity of our profession, you may, with honest scorn, reject whatever is unworthy of it.

Fr. Should Barnwell, or I, who have the benefit of your example, by our ill conduct bring any imputation on that honourable name, we must be left without excuse.

Tho. You compliment, young man. [*Trueman bows respectfully*] Nay, I am not offended. As the name of merchant never degrades the gentleman, so by no means does it exclude him; only take heed not to purchase the character of complaisant at the expence of your sincerity.---But to answer your question: The bank of Genoa had agreed, at an excessive interest, and on good security, to advance the king of Spain a sum of money sufficient to equip his vast Armada; of which our peerless Elizabeth (more than in name the mother of her people). being well inform'd, sent Walsingham, her wise and faithful secretary, to consult the merchants of this loyal city; who all agreed to direct their several agents to influence, if possible, the Genoese to break their contract with the Spanish court. 'Tis done, the state and bank of Genoa having maturely weigh'd, and rightly judged of their true interest, prefer the friendship of the merchants of London to that of the monarch, who proudly styles himself king of both Indies.

Fr. Happy success of prudent counsels! What an expence of blood and treasure is here saved! 'Excellent queen; O, how unlike those princes, who make the danger of foreign enemies a pretence to oppress their subjects by taxes great, and grievous to be borne!

Tho. Not so our gracious queen! whose richest exchequer is her people's love, as their happiness her greatest glory.

Fr. On these terms to defend us, is to make our protection a benefit worthy her who confers it, and well worth our acceptance.' Sir, have you any commands for me at this time?

Tho. Only look carefully over the files, to see whether there are any tradesmen's bills unpaid; if there are, send and discharge 'em. We must not let artificers lose their

GEORGE BARNWELL. 11

their time, so useful to the public and their families, in unnecessary attendance. [Exit Trueman.]

Enter Maria.

Well, Maria, have you given orders for the entertainment? I would have it in some measure worthy the guests. Let there be plenty, and of the best, that the courtiers may at least commend our hospitality.

Ma. Sir, I have endeavoured not to wrong your well-known generosity by an ill-tim'd parsimony.

Thor. Nay, 'twas a needless caution: I have no cause to doubt your prudence.

Ma. Sir, I find myself unfit for conversation; I should but increase the number of the company, without adding to their satisfaction.

Thor. Nay, my child, this melancholy must not be indulged.

Ma. Company will but increase it: I wish you would dispense with my absence. Solitude best suits my present temper.

Tho. You are not insensible, that it is chiefly on your account these noble lords do me the honour so frequently to grace my board. Should you be absent, the disappointment may make them repent of their condescension, and think their labour lost.

Ma. He that shall think his time or honour lost in visiting you, can set no real value on your daughter's company, whose only merit is, that she is yours. The man of quality who chooses to converse with a gentleman and merchant of your worth and character, may confer honour by so doing, but he loses none.

Thor. Come, come, Maria, I need not tell you, that a young gentleman may prefer your conversation to mine, and yet intend me no disrespect at all; for though he may lose no honour in my company, 'tis very natural for him to expect more pleasure in yours. I remember the time when the company of the greatest and wisest man in the kingdom would have been insipid and tiresome to me, if it had deprived me of an opportunity of enjoying your mother's.

Ma. Your's, no doubt, was as agreeable to her; for generous minds know no pleasure in society but where 'tis mutual.

Thor.

GEORGE BARNWELL.

Thor. Thou knowest I have no heir, no child, but thee; the fruits of many years successful industry must all be thine. Now it would give me pleasure, great as my love, to see on whom you will bestow it. I am daily solicited by men of the greatest rank and merit for leave to address you; but I have hitherto declined it, in hopes that, by observation, I should learn which way your inclination tends; for, as I know love to be essential to happiness in the marriage state, I had rather my approbation should confirm your choice than direct it.

Ma. What can I say? How shall I answer, as I ought, this tenderness, so uncommon even in the best of parents? But you are without example; yet, had you been less indulgent, I had been most wretched. That I look on the croud of courtiers that visit here, with equal esteem, but equal indifference, you have observed, and I must needs confess;—yet, had you asserted your authority, and insisted on a parent's right to be obey'd, I had submitted, and to my duty sacrificed my peace.

Thor. From your perfect obedience in every other instance, I feared as much; and therefore would leave you without a bias in an affair wherein your happiness is so immediately concerned.

Ma. Whether from a want of that just ambition that would become your daughter, or from some other cause, I know not; but I find high birth and titles don't recommend the man who owns them, to my affections.

Thor. I would not that they should, unless his merit recommends him more. A noble birth and fortune, though they make not a bad man good, yet they are a real advantage to a worthy one, and place his virtues in the fairest light.

Ma. I cannot answer for my inclinations; but they shall ever be submitted to your wisdom and authority. And as you will not compel me to marry where I cannot love, love shall never make me act contrary to my duty. Sir, have I your permission to retire?

Thor. I'll see you to your chamber.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, a room in Millwood's house.

Enter Millwood and Lucy.

Mill. How do I look to-day, Lucy?

Lucy. Oh, killingly, Madam! A little more red, and you'll be irresistible!——But why this more than ordinary care of your dress and complexion? What new conquest are you aiming at?

Mil. A conquest would be new indeed!

Lucy. Not to you, who make 'em every day——but to me——Well! 'tis what I'm never to expect——unfortunate as I am——But your wit and beauty——

Mil. First made me a wretch, and still continue me so. Men, however generous or sincere to one another, are all selfish hypocrites in their affairs with us, we are no otherwise esteemed or regarded by them, but as we contribute to their satisfaction.

Lucy. You are certainly, Madam, on the wrong side in this argument. Is not the expence all theirs? And I am sure, it is our own fault if we han't our share of the pleasure.

Mil. We are but slaves to men.

Lucy. Nay, 'tis they that are slaves most certainly, for we lay them under contribution.

Mil. Slaves have no property; no, not even in themselves: all is the victor's.

Lucy. You are strangely arbitrary in your principles, Madam.

Mil. I would have my conquest complete, like those of the Spaniards in the new world; who first plundered the natives of all the wealth they had, and then condemn'd the wretches to the mines for life, to work for more.

Lucy. Well, I shall never approve of your scheme of government: I should think it much more politic, as well as just, to find my subjects an easier employment.

Mil. It is a general maxim among the knowing part of mankind, that a woman without virtue, like a man without honour or honesty, is capable of any action, though never so vile: and yet what pains will they not take, what arts not use, to seduce us from our innocence, and make us contemptible and wicked, even in their own opinion? Then is it not just, the villains, to their cost, should find us so? But guilt makes them suspicious, and keeps them on their guard; therefore we can take advantage only of the young and innocent part of the sex,

who having never injured women, apprehend no injury from them.

Lucy. Ay, they must be young indeed!

Mill. Such a one, I think, I have found. As I have passed through the city, I have often observed him receiving and paying considerable sums of money; from thence I conclude he is employed in affairs of consequence.

Lucy. Is he handsome?

Mill. Ay, ay, the stripling is well made, and has a good face.

Lucy. About——

Mill. Eighteen.

Lucy. Innocent, handsome, and about eighteen! You'll be vastly happy. Why, if you manage well, you may keep him to yourself these two or three years.

Mill. If I manage well, I shall have done with him much sooner. Having long had a design on him, and meeting him yesterday, I made a full stop, and gazing wishfully on his face, ask'd his name. He blush'd, and bowing very low, answer'd, George Barnwell. I begg'd his pardon for the freedom I had taken, and told him, that he was the person I had long wish'd to see, and to whom I had an affair of importance to communicate at a proper time and place. He named a tavern; I talked of honour and reputation, and invited him to my house. He swallowed the bait, promised to come, and this is the time I expect him. [*Knocking at the door.*] Somebody knocks——D'ye hear; I am at home to nobody to-day but him. [*Exit Lucy.*] Less affairs must give way to those of more consequence; and I am strangely mistaken if this does not prove of great importance to me, and him too, before I have done with him. Now after what manner shall I receive him? Let me consider——What manner of person am I to receive? He is young, innocent, and bashful; therefore I must take care not to put him out of countenance at first. 'But then, if I have any skill in physiognomy, he is amorous; and with a little assistance will soon get the better of his modesty.' I'll e'en trust to nature, who does wonders in these matters. 'If to seem what one is not, in order to be the better lik'd for what one really is; if to speak

• one thing, and mean the direct contrary, be art in a woman — I know nothing of nature.

Enter Barnwell, bowing very low, Lucy at a distance.

Mil. Sir, the surprise and joy! —

Barn. Madam!

Mil. This is such a favour! — [*Advancing.*

Barn. Pardon me, Madam!

Mil. So unhop'd for! [*Still advances.*

[*Barnwell salutes her, and retires in confusion.*

To see you here — Excuse the confusion —

Barn. I fear I am too bold —

Mil. Alas, Sir, I may justly apprehend you think me so. Please, Sir, to sit. I am as much at a loss how to receive this honour as I ought, as I am surprized at your goodness in conferring it.

Barn. I thought you had expected me: I promised to come.

Mil. That is the more surprising; few men are such religious observers of their word.

Barn. All, who are honest, are.

Mil. To one another; but we simple women are seldom thought of consequence enough to gain a place in their remembrance.

[*Laying her hand on his, as by accident.*

Barn. Her disorder is so great, she don't perceive she has laid her hand on mine. Heav'n's! how she trembles! What can this mean? [*Aside.*

Mil. The interest I have in all that relates to you, (the reason of which you shall know hereafter) excites my curiosity; and were I sure you would pardon my presumption, I should desire to know your real sentiments on a very particular subject.

Barn. Madam, you may command my poor thoughts on any subject. I have none that I would conceal.

Mil. You'll think me bold.

Barn. No, indeed.

Mil. What then are your thoughts of love?

Barn. If you mean the love of women, I have not thought of it at all. My youth and circumstances make such thoughts improper in me yet. But if you mean the general love we owe to mankind, I think no one has more of it in his temper than myself. I don't know that

person in the world, whose happiness I don't wish, and wou'dn't promote, were it in my power. In an especial manner I love my uncle, and my master; but above all, my friend.

Mil. You have a friend, then, whom you love?

Barn. As he does me, sincerely.

Mil. He is, no doubt, often bless'd with your company and conversation.

Barn. We live in one house, and both serve the same worthy merchant.

Mil. Happy, happy youth! Whoe'er thou art, I envy thee, 'and so must all, who see and know this youth.' What have I lost, by being form'd a woman! I hate my sex, my self. Had I been a man, I might, perhaps, have been as happy in your friendship, as he who now enjoys it is: but as it is——Oh!——

Barn. I never observ'd woman before; or this is, sure, the most beautiful of her sex. [*Aside.*] You seem disordered, Madam—May I know the cause?

Mil. Do not ask me——I can never speak it, whatever is the cause. I wish for things impossible. I would be a servant, bound to the same master, to live in one house with you.

Barn. How strange, and yet how kind, her words and actions are! And the effect they have on me is as strange. I feel desires I never knew before. I must be gone, while I have power to go. [*Aside.*] Madam, I humbly take my leave.

Mil. You will not, sure, leave me so soon!

Barn. Indeed I must.

Mil. You cannot be so cruel! I have prepar'd a poor supper, at which I promis'd myself your company.

Barn. I am sorry I must refuse the honour you designed me: but my duty to my master calls me hence. I never yet neglected his service. He is so gentle, and so good a master, that should I wrong him, though he might forgive me, I should never forgive myself.

Mil. Am I refused by the first man, the second favour I ever stoop'd to to ask? Go then, thou proud hard-hearted youth; but know, you are the only man that could be found; who would let me sue twice for greater favours.

Barn.

Barn. What shall I do ! How shall I go, or stay !

Mil. Yet do not, do not leave me. I with my sex's pride would meet your scorn ; but when I look upon you, when I behold those eyes—Oh ! spare my tongue, and let my blushes—this flood of tears too, that will force its way, declare—what woman's modesty should hide.

Barn. Oh, Heavens ! she loves me, worthless as I am. Her looks, her words, her flowing tears confess it. And can I leave her then ? Oh, never, never ! Madam, dry up your tears : you shall command me always ; I will stay here for ever, if you would have me.

Lucy. So : she has wheedled him out of his virtue of obedience already, and will strip him of all the rest, one after another, till she has left him as few as her ladyship, or myself.

Mil. Now you are kind, indeed ; but I mean not to detain you always : I would have you shake off all slavish obedience to your master ; but you may serve him still.

Lucy. Serve him still ! Ay, or he'll have no opportunity of fingering his cash ; and then he'll not serve your end, I'll be sworn. [*Aside.*]

Enter Blunt.

Blunt. Madam, supper's on the table.

Mil. Come, Sir, you'll excuse all defects. My thoughts were too much employed on my guest to observe the entertainment. [*Exeunt Barnwell and Millwood.*]

Blunt. What ! is all this preparation, this elegant supper, variety of wines, and music, for the entertainment of that young fellow ?

Lucy. So it seems.

Blunt. How ! is our mistress turned fool at last ? She's in love with him, I suppose.

Lucy. I suppose not. But she designs to make him in love with her, if she can.

Blunt. What will she get by that ? He seems under age, and can't be suppos'd to have much money.

Lucy. But his master has, and that's the same thing, as she'll manage it.

Blunt. I don't like this fooling with a handsome young fellow ; while she's endeavouring to ensnare him, she may be caught herself.

Lucy. Nay, were she like me, that would certainly be the consequence; for, I confess, there is something in youth and innocence that moves me mightily.

Blunt. Yes, so does the smoothness and plumpness of a partridge move a mighty desire in the hawk to be the destruction of it.

Lucy. Why, birds are their prey, and men are ours; though, as you observed, we are sometimes caught ourselves. But that, I dare say, will never be the case of our mistress.

Blunt. I wish it may prove so; for you know we all depend upon her. Should she trifle away her time with a young fellow that there's nothing to be got by, we must all starve.

Lucy. There's no danger of that; for I am sure she has no view in this affair but interest.

Blunt. Well, and what hopes are there of success in that?

Lucy. The most promising that can be. 'Tis true the youth has his scruples; but she'll soon teach him to answer them, by stifling his conscience. Oh, the lad is in a hopeful way, depend upon't! [Exeunt.]

SCENE *draws, and discovers Barnwell and Millwood at supper. An entertainment of music and singing. After which they come forward.*

Barn. What can I answer? All that I know is, that you are fair, and I am miserable.

Mil. We are both so, and yet the fault is in ourselves.

Barn. To ease our present anguish by plunging into guilt, is to buy a moment's pleasure with an age of pain.

Mil. I should have thought the joys of love as lasting as they are great; if ours prove otherwise, 'tis your inconstancy must make them so.

Barn. The law of heav'n will not be revers'd; and that requires us to govern our passions.

Mil. To give us sense of beauty and desires, and yet forbid us to taste and be happy, is a cruelty to nature. Have we passions only to torment us?

Barn. To hear you talk, though in the rage of vice, gaze upon your beauty, press your hand, and see your
now

'snow white bosom heave and fall,' inflames my wishes ; my pulse beats high, ' my senses all are in a hurry,' and I am on the rack of wild desire. — Yet, for a moment's guilty pleasure, shall I lose my innocence, my peace of mind, and hopes of solid happiness ?

Mil. Chimeras all !

Barn. I would not——yet must on——

' Reluctant thus the merchant quits his ease,
' And trulls to rocks and sands, and stormy seas ;
' In hopes some unknown golden coast to find,
' Commits himself, though doubtful, to the wind.
' Longs much for joys to come — yet mourns those
left behind.'

Mil. Along with me and prove

No joys like woman-kind, no heav'n like love.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *a room in Thorowgood's house.*

Enter Barnwell.

BARNWELL.

HOW strange are all things round me ! Like some thief, who treads forbidden ground, and fain would lurk unseen, fearful I enter each apartment of this well-known house. To guilty love, as if that were too little, already have I added breach of trust——A thief !——Can I know myself that wretched thing, and look my honest friend and injured master in the face ? Though hypocrisy may a while conceal my guilt, at length it will be known, and public shame and ruin must ensue. In the mean time, what must be my life ? Ever to speak a language foreign to my heart ; hourly to add to the number of my crimes, in order to conceal 'em. Sure such was the condition of the grand apostate, when first he lost his purity. Like me, disconsolate, he wandered ; and while yet in heaven, bore all his future hell about him.

Enter

Enter Trueman.

Tr. Barnwell, Oh, how I rejoice to see you safe ! So will our master and his gentle daughter ; who, during your absence, often inquired after you.

Barn. Would he were gone ! His officious love will pry into the secrets of my soul. *[Aside.]*

Tr. Unless you knew the pain the whole family has felt on your account, you can't conceive how much you are belov'd. But why thus cold and silent ? When my heart is full of joy for your return, why do you turn away ; why thus avoid me ? What have I done ? How am I altered since you saw me last ? Or rather, what have you done ; and why are you thus chang'd ? for I am still the same.

Barn. What have I done, indeed ! *[Aside.]*

Tr. Not speak !——nor look upon me !——

Barn. By my face he will discover all I would conceal ; methinks already I begin to hate him. *[Aside.]*

Tr. I cannot bear this usage from a friend ; one whom till now I ever found so loving ; whom yet I love ; tho' this unkindness strikes at the root of friendship, and might destroy it in any breast but mine.

Barn. I am not well. *[Turning to him.]* Sleep has been a stranger to these eyes since you beheld them last.

Tr. Heavy they look indeed, and swoln with tears ;——now they overflow. Rightly did my sympathizing heart forebode last night, when thou wast absent, something fatal to our peace.

Barn. Your friendship engages you too far. My troubles, whate'er they are, are mine alone : you have no interest in them, nor ought your concern for me to give you a moment's pain.

Tr. You speak as if you knew of friendship nothing but the name. Before I saw your grief, I felt it. ' Since we parted last I have slept no more than you, but ' pensive in my chamber sat alone, and spent the tedious ' night in wishes for your safety and return ; ' e'en now, though ignorant of the cause, your sorrow wounds me to the heart.

Barn. 'Twill not be always thus. Friendship and all engagements cease, as circumstances and occasions vary ;
and

and since you once may hate me, perhaps it might be better for us both that now you loved me less.

Tr. Sure I but dream ! Without a cause would Barnwell use me thus ? Ungenerous and ungrateful youth ; farewell ; I shall endeavour to follow your advice. [*Going.*] Yet stay, perhaps, I am too rash, and angry when the cause demands compassion. Some unforeseen calamity may have befallen him too great to bear.

Barn. What part am I reduced to act ? 'Tis vile and base to move his temper thus, the best of friends and men.

Tr. I am to blame ; pr'ythee forgive me, Barnwell : Try to compose your ruffled mind ; and let me know the cause that thus transports you from yourself ; my friendly counsel may restore your peace.

Barn. All that is possible for man to do for man, your generous friendship may effect ; but here even that's in vain.

Tr. Something dreadful is labouring in your breast ; Oh, give it vent, and let me share your grief ; 'twill ease your pain, should it admit no cure, and make it lighter by the part I bear.

Barn. Vain supposition ! my woes increase by being observed ; should the cause be known, they would exceed all bounds.

Tr. So well I know thy honest heart, guilt cannot harbour there.

Barn. Oh, torture insupportable ! [*Aside.*]

Tr. Then why am I excluded ? Have I a thought I would conceal from you ?

Barn. If still you urge me on this hated subject, I'll never enter more beneath this roof, nor see your face again.

Tr. 'Tis strange — but I have done, say but you hate me not.

Barn. Hate you ! I am not that monster yet.

Tr. Shall our friendship still continue ?

Barn. It's a blessing I never was worthy of, yet now must stand on terms ; and but upon conditions can confirm it.

Tr. What are they ?

Barn. Never hereafter, though you should wonder at my

my conduct, desire to know more than I am willing to reveal.

Tr. 'Tis hard; but upon any conditions I must be your friend.

Barn. Then, as much as one, lost to himself can be another's, I am your's. [Embracing.]

Tr. Be ever so, and may heaven restore your peace!

Barn. Will yesterday return? We have heard the glorious sun, that till then incessant roll'd, once stopp'd his rapid course, and once went back. The dead have risen, and parched rocks pour'd forth a liquid stream to quench a people's thirst. The sea divided, and form'd walls of water, while a whole nation pass'd in safety through its sandy bosom. Hungry lions have refus'd their prey; and men unhurt have walk'd amidst consuming flames; but never yet did time, once past, return.

Tr. Though the continued chain of time has never once been broke, nor ever will, but uninterrupted must keep on its course, till lost in eternity, it ends where it first began; yet as heaven can repair whatever evils time can bring upon us, we ought never to despair. But business requires our attendance; business the youth's best preservative from ill, as idleness his worst of snares. Will you go with me?

Barn. I'll take a little time to reflect on what has past, and follow you. [Exit Trueman.] I might have trusted Trueman, and engag'd him to apply to my uncle to repair the wrong I have done my master; but what of Millwood? Must I expose her too? Ungenerous and base! Then heaven requires it not. But heaven requires that I forsake her. What! never to see her more? Does heaven require that? I hope I may see her, and heaven not be offended. Presumptuous hope! Dearly already have I proved my frailty. Should I once more tempt heaven, I may be left to fall, never to rise again. Yet, shall I leave her, for ever leave her, and not let her know the cause? She who loves me with such a boundless passion! Can cruelty be duty? I judge of what she then must feel, by what I now endure. The love of life, and fear of shame, oppos'd by inclination strong as death or shame, like wind and tide in
raging

raging conflict met, when neither can prevail, keep me in doubt. How then can I determine?

Enter Thorowgood.

Thor. Without a cause assign'd, or notice given, to absent yourself last night was a fault, young man, and I came to chide you for it, but hope I am prevented. That modest blush, the confusion so visible in your face, speak grief and shame. When we have offended heaven, it requires no more; and shall man, who needs himself to be forgiven, be harder to appease? If my pardon or love be of moment to your peace, look up secure of both.

Barn. This goodness has o'ercome me. [*Aside.*] Oh, Sir, you know not the nature and extent of my offence; and I should abuse your mistaken bounty to receive it. Though I had rather die than speak my shame; though racks could not have forced the guilty secret from my breast, your kindness has.

Thor. Enough, enough, whate'er it be; this concern shews you're convinced, and I am satisfied. How painful is the sense of guilt to an ingenuous mind? Some youthful folly, which it were prudent not to inquire into. 'When we consider the frail condition of humanity, it may raise our pity, not our wonder, that youth should go astray; when reason, weak at the best, opposed to inclination, scarce formed, and wholly unassisted by experience, faintly contends, or willingly becomes the slave of sense. The state of youth is much to be deplored, and the more so, because they see it not; being then to danger most exposed, when they are least prepared for their defence.' [*Aside.*]

Barn. It will be known, and you'll recal your pardon and abhor me.

Thor. I never will. Yet be upon your guard in this gay thoughtless season of your life; 'when the sense of pleasure's quick, and passions high, the voluptuous appetites, raging and fierce, demand the strongest curb; take heed of a relapse: when vice becomes habitual, the very power of leaving it is lost.'

Barn. Hear me, on my knees, confess—

Thor. Not a syllable more upon this subject; it were not

not mercy but cruelty, to hear what must give you such torment to reveal.

Barn. This generosity amazes and distracts me.

Thor. This remorse makes thee dearer to me than if thou hadst never offended. Whatever is your fault, of this I am certain, 'twas harder for you to offend, than me to pardon. [Exit Thorowgood.]

Barn. Villain! Villain! Villain! basely to wrong so excellent a man. Should I again return to folly? — Detested thought! — But what of Millwood then? — Why, I renounce her; — I give her up — The struggle's over, and virtue has prevailed. Reason may convince, but gratitude compels. This unlooked for generosity has sav'd me from destruction. [Going.]

Enter a footman.

Foot. Sir, two ladies from your uncle in the country desire to see you.

Barn. Who should they be. [Aside.] Tell them I'll wait upon 'em.

Barn. Methinks I dread to see 'em — Now every thing alarms me. — Guilt, what a coward hast thou made me!

SCENE, *another room in Thorowgood's house.*

Enter Millwood, Lucy, and a Footman.

Foot. Ladies, he'll wait upon you immediately.

Mil. 'Tis very well. — I thank you. [Exit Foot.]

Enter Barnwell.

Barn. Confusion! Millwood!

Mil. That angry look tells me, that here I am an' unwelcome guest; I feared as much; the unhappy are so every where.

Barn. Will nothing but my utter ruin content you?

Mil. Unkind and cruel! Lost myself, your happiness is now my only care.

Barn. How did you gain admission?

Mil. Saying we were desired by your uncle to visit, and deliver a message to you, we were received by the family without suspicion, and with much respect conducted here.

Barn. Why did you come at all?

Mil. I never shall trouble you more. I'm come to take

take my leave for ever. Such is the malice of my fate : I go hopeless, despairing ever to return. This hour is all I have left : one short hour is all I have to bestow on love and you, for whom I thought the longest life too short.

Barn. Then we are met to part for ever ?

Mil. It must be so. Yet think not that time or absence shall ever put a period to my grief, or make me love you less. Tho' I must leave you, yet condemn me not.

Barn. Condemn you ! No, I approve your resolution, and rejoice to hear it ; 'tis just——'tis necessary,—— I have well weigh'd and found it so.

Lucy. I am afraid the young man has more sense than she thought he had. *[Aside.]*

Barn. Before you came, I had determin'd never to see you more.

Mil. Confusion !

[Aside.]

Lucy. Ay, we are all out ; this is a turn so unexpected, that I shall make nothing of my part ; they must e'en play the scene betwixt themselves. *[Aside.]*

Mil. 'Twas some relief to think, tho' absent, you would love me still ; but to find, 'tho' fortune had been 'indulgent, that you, more cruel and inconstant,' you had resolved to cast me off——This, as I never could expect, I have not learnt to bear.

Barn. I am sorry to hear you blame me in a resolution that so well becomes us both.

Mil. I have reason for what I do, but you have none.

Barn. Can we want a reason for parting, who have so many to wish we never had met ?

Mil. Look on me, Barnwell. Am I deform'd or old, that satiety so soon succeeds enjoyment ? Nay, look again ; am I not she whom yesterday you thought the fairest and the kindest of her sex ; whose hand, trembling with ecstasy, you press'd and moulded thus, while on my eyes you gazed with such delight, as if desire increased by being fed ?

Barn. No more ; let me repent my former follies, if possible, without remembering what they were.

Mil. Why ?

Barn. Such is my frailty, that 'tis dangerous.

Mil. Where is the danger, since we are to part ?

Barn. The thought of that already is too painful.

Mil. If it be painful to part, then I may hope, at least, you do not hate me?

Barn. No——no——I never said I did——Oh, my heart!

Mil. Perhaps you pity me?

Barn. I do——I do——Indeed I do.

Mil. You'll think upon me?

Barn. Doubt it not, while I can think at all.

Mil. You may judge an embrace at parting too great a favour——though it would be the last. [*He draws back.* A look shall then suffice——Farewel——for ever.

[*Exeunt Millwood and Lucy.*]

Barn. If to resolve to suffer be to conquer,——I have conquer'd——Painful victory!

Re-enter Millwood and Lucy.

Mil. One thing I had forgot;——I never must return to my own house again. This I thought proper to let you know, lest your mind should change, and you should seek in vain to find me there. Forgive me this second intrusion; I only came to give you this caution, and that, perhaps, was needless.

Barn. I hope it was; yet it is kind, and I must thank you for it.

Mil. My friend, your arm. [*To Lucy.*] Now, I am gone for ever. [*Going.*]

Barn. One thing more——Sure there's no danger in my knowing where you go? If you think otherwise——

Mil. Alas!

[*Weeping.*]

Lucy. We are right, I find; that's my cue. [*Aside.* Ah, dear Sir! she's going she knows not whither; but go she must.

Barn. Humanity obliges me to wish you well: why will you thus expose yourself to needless troubles?

Lucy. Nay, there's no help for it: she must quit the town immediately, and the kingdom as soon as possible. It was no small matter, you may be sure, that could make her resolve to leave you.

Mil. No more, my friend; since he for whose dear sake alone I suffer, and am content to suffer, is kind and pities me; where'er I wander, thro' wilds and deserts benighted and forlorn, that thought shall give me comfort.

Barn. For my sake!—Oh, tell me how, which way am I so curs'd to bring such ruin on thee?

Mil. No matter; I am contented with my lot.

Barn. Leave me not in this incertainty.

Mil. I have said too much.

Barn. How, how am I the cause of your undoing?

Mil. To know it will but encrease your troubles.

Barn. My troubles can't be greater than they are.

Lucy. Well, well, Sir, if she won't satisfy you, I will.

Barn. I am bound to you beyond expression.

Mil. Remember, Sir, that I desired you not to hear it.

Barn. Begin, and ease my racking expectation.

Lucy. Why, you must know, my lady here was an only child, and her parents dying while she was young, left her and her fortune (no inconsiderable one, I assure you) to the care of a gentleman who has a good estate of his own.

Mil. Ay, ay, the barbarous man is rich enough; but what are riches when compar'd to love?

Lucy. For a while he perform'd the office of a faithful guardian, settled her in a house, hir'd her servants.—But you have seen in what manner she liv'd, so I need say no more of that.

Mil. How I shall live hereafter, Heaven knows!

Lucy. All things went on as one could wish; till some time ago, his wife dying, he fell violently in love with his charge, and would fain have marry'd her. Now the man is neither old nor ugly, but a good personable sort of a man, but I don't know how it was, she could never endure him. In short, her ill usage so provoked him, that he brought in an account of his executorship, wherein he makes her debtor to him.—

Mil. A trifle in itself, but more than enough to ruin me, whom, by this unjust account, he had stripp'd of all before.

Lucy. Now, she having neither money nor friend, except me, who am as unfortunate as herself, he compell'd her to pass his account, and give bond for the sum he demanded; but still provided handsomely for her, and continued his courtship, till being inform'd by his spies (truly I suspect some in her own family) that you were entertain'd at her house, and staid with her all night, he

came this morning raving and storming like a madman, talks no more of marriage, (so there's no hope of making up matters that way) but vows her ruin, unless she'll allow him the same favour that he supposes she granted you.

Barn. Must she be ruin'd, or find her refuge in another's arms?

Mil. He gave me but an hour to resolve in; that's happily spent with you — And now I go —

Barn. To be expos'd to all the rigours of the various seasons; the summer's parching heat, and winter's cold; unhoused, to wander, friendless, thro' the inhospitable world, in misery and want; attended with fear and danger, and pursued by malice and revenge. Wouldst thou endure all this for me, and can I do nothing, nothing, to prevent it?

Lucy. 'Tis really a pity there can be no way found out.

Barn. Oh, where are all my resolutions now? 'Like early vapours, or the morning dew, chas'd by the sun's warm beams, they're vanish'd and lost, as tho' they had never been.'

Lucy. Now I advis'd her, Sir, to comply with the gentleman; 'that would not only put an end to her troubles, but make her fortune at once.'

Barn. Tormenting fiend, away! I had rather perish, nay, see her perish, than have her saved by him. I will, myself, prevent her ruin, though with my own. A moment's patience; I'll return immediately.

[Exit Barnwell.]

Lucy. 'Twas well you came, or, by what I can perceive, you had lost him.

Mil. That, I must confess, was a danger I did not foresee; I was only afraid he should have come without money. You know, a house of entertainment, like mine, is not kept without expence.

Lucy. That's very true; but then you should be reasonable in your demands; 'tis pity to discourage a young man.

Mil. Leave that to me.

Re-enter Barnwell, with a bag of money.

Barn. What am I about to do? — Now you, who boast your reason all-sufficient, suppose yourselves in my condition, and determine for me; whether 'tis right to let

let her suffer for my faults, or, by this small addition to my guilt, prevent the ill effects of what is past.

Lucy. These young finners think every thing in the ways of wickedness so strange!—But I could tell him, that this is nothing but what's very common; for one vice as naturally begets another, as a father a son. But he'll find out that himself, if he lives long enough.

[*Aside.*

Barn. Here, take this, and with it purchase your deliverance; return to your house, and live in peace and safety.

Mil. So, I may hope to see you there again?

Barn. Answer me not, but fly, lest, in the agonies of my remorse, I take again what is not mine to give, and abandon thee to want and misery.

Mil. Say but you'll come.

Barn. You are my fate, my Heaven or my hell; only leave me now, dispose of me hereafter as you please.

[*Exeunt Millwood and Lucy.*

What have I done? Were my resolutions founded on reason, and sincerely made? Why then has Heaven suffer'd me to fall? I sought not the occasion; and if my heart deceives me not, compassion and generosity were my motives. 'Is virtue inconsistent with itself, or are vice and virtue only empty names; or do they depend on accidents, beyond our power to produce, or to prevent; wherein we have no part, and yet must be determined by the event?'—But why should I attempt to reason? All is confusion, horror, and remorse. I find I am lost, cast down from all my late-erected hope, and plunged again in guilt, yet scarce know how or why:

Such undistinguish'd horrors make my brain,

Like hell, the seat of darkness and of pain.

[*Exit.*

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *a room in Thorowgood's house.*Thorowgood and Trueman *discovered (with account books),
sitting at a table.*

THOROWGOOD.

METHINKS I would not have you only learn the method of merchandize; and practise it hereafter merely as a means of getting wealth: it will be well worth your pains to study it as a science, to see how it is founded in reason and the nature of things; how it promotes humanity, as it has open'd, and yet keeps up an intercourse between nations, far remote, from one another in situation, customs and religion; promoting arts, industry, peace, and plenty; by mutual benefits diffusing mutual love from pole to pole.

Tr. Something of this I have consider'd, and hope, by your assistance, to extend my thoughts much farther. I have observ'd those countries where trade is promoted and encouraged, do not make discoveries to destroy, but to improve mankind by love and friendship; to tame the fierce, and polish the most savage; to teach them the advantage of honest traffick, by taking from them, with their own consent, their useless superfluities, and giving them, in return, what, from their ignorance in manual arts, their situation, or some other accident, they stand in need of.

Thor. 'Tis justly observ'd: the populous east, luxurious, abounds with glittering gems, bright pearls, aromatic spices, and health-restoring drugs: the late-found western world's rich earth glows with unnumber'd veins of gold and silver ore. On every climate, and on every country, Heaven has bestow'd some good peculiar to itself. It is the industrious merchant's business to collect the various blessings of each soil and climate; and, with the product of the whole, to enrich his native country.—Well, I have examin'd your accounts; they are not only just, as I have always found them, but regularly kept, and fairly enter'd. I commend your diligence. Method in business is the surest guide: he who neglects it, frequently stumbles, and always wanders

‘wanders perplex’d, uncertain, and in danger.’ Are Barnwell’s accounts ready for my inspection? He does not use to be the last on these occasions.

Tr. Upon receiving your orders he retir’d, I thought in some confusion. If you please, I’ll go and hasten him. I hope he has not been guilty of any neglect.

Ther. I’m now going to the Exchange; let him know at my return I expect to find him ready. [Exit.

Enter Maria with a book. Sits and reads.

Ma. How forcible is truth? The weakest mind, inspir’d with love of that, fix’d and collected in itself, with indifference beholds the united force of earth and hell opposing. Such souls are rais’d above the sense of pain, or so supported that they regard it not. The martyr cheaply purchases his Heaven; small are his sufferings, great is his reward. Not so the wretch who combats love with duty; whose mind, weaken’d and dissolved by the soft passion, feeble and hopeless, opposes his own desires.—What is an hour, a day, a year of pain, to a whole life of tortures such as these?

Enter Trueman.

Tr. Oh, Barnwell! Oh, my friend! how art thou fallen!

Ma. Ha! Barnwell! What of him? Speak, say, what of Barnwell?

Tr. ’Tis not to be conceal’d: I’ve news to tell of him, that will afflict your generous father, yourself, and all who know him.

Ma. Defend us, Heaven!

Tr. I cannot speak it. See there.

[Trueman gives a letter, Maria reads.

“ I know my absence will surprize my honour’d master and yourself; and the more, when you shall understand, that the reason of my withdrawing, is, my having embezzled part of the cash with which I was entrusted. After this, ’tis needless to inform you, that I intend never to return again. Though this might have been known, by examining my accounts; yet to prevent that unnecessary trouble, and to cut off all fruitless expectations of my return, I have left this from the lost

GEORGE BARNWELL.”

Tr.

Fr. Lost indeed ! Yet how he should be guilty of what he there charges himself withal, raises my wonder equal to my grief. Never had youth a higher sense of virtue. Justly he thought, and as he thought he practised ; never was life more regular than his. An understanding uncommon at his years, an open, generous manliness of temper ; his manners easy, unaffected, and engaging.

Ma. This, and much more you might have said with truth. He was the delight of every eye, and joy of every heart that knew him.

Fr. Since such he was, and was my friend, can I support his loss ? See, the fairest, happiest maid this wealthy city boasts, kindly condescends to weep for thy unhappy fate, poor, ruin'd Barnwell !

Ma. Trueman, do you think a soul so delicate as his, so sensible of shame, can e'er submit to live a slave to vice ?

Fr. Never, never. So well I know him, I'm sure this act of his, so contrary to his nature, must have been caused by some unavoidable necessity.

Ma. Is there no means yet to preserve him ?

Fr. Oh, that there were ! but few men recover their reputation lost, a merchant never. Nor would he, I fear ; tho' I should find him, ever be brought to look his injur'd master in the face.

Ma. I fear as much, and therefore would never have my father know it.

Fr. That's impossible.

Ma. What's the sum ?

Fr. 'Tis considerable ; I've mark'd it here, to shew it, with the letter, to your father, at his return.

Ma. If I should supply the money, could you so dispose of that and the account, as to conceal this unhappy mismanagement from my father ?

Fr. Nothing more easy. But can you intend it ? Will you save a helpless wretch from ruin ? Oh, 'twere an act worthy such exalted virtue as Maria's ! Sure Heaven, in mercy to my friend, inspired the generous thought.

Ma. Doubt not but I would purchase so great a happiness at a much dearer price. But how shall he be found ?

Fr. Trust to my diligence for that. In the mean time,

I'll

I'll conceal his absence from your father, or find such excuses for it, that the real cause shall never be suspected.

Ma. In attempting to save from shame, one whom we hope may yet return to virtue, to Heaven, and you, the only witnesses of this action, I appeal, whether I do any thing misbecoming my sex and character.

Yr. Earth must approve the deed, and Heaven, I doubt not, will reward it.

Ma. If Heaven succeeds it, I am well rewarded. A virgin's fame is sullied by suspicion's lightest breath : and therefore as this must be a secret from my father and the world, for Barnwell's sake, for mine, let it be so to him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, a room in Millwood's house.

Enter Lucy and Blunt.

Lucy. Well, what do you think of Millwood's conduct now ?

Blunt. I own it is surprising : I don't know which to admire most, her feigned or his real passion ; tho' I have sometimes been afraid that her avarice would discover her. But his youth and want of experience make it the easier to impose on him.

Lucy. No, it is his love. To do him justice, notwithstanding his youth, he don't want understanding. But you men are much easier imposed on in these affairs, than your vanity will allow you to believe. Let me see the wisest of you all as much in love with me as Barnwell is with Millwood, and I'll engage to make as great a fool of him.

Blunt. And, all circumstances consider'd, to make as much money of him too ?

Lucy. I can't answer for that. Her artifice, in making him rob his master at first, and the various stratagems by which she has obliged him to continue that course, astonish even me, who know her so well.

Blunt. But then you are to consider that the money was his master's.

Lucy. There was the difficulty of it. Had it been his own, it had been nothing. Were the world his, she might have it for a smile. But those golden days are done ; he's ruin'd, and Millwood's hopes of farther profits there, are at an end.

Blunt.

Blunt. That's no more than we all expected.

Lucy. Being call'd by his master to make up his accounts, he was forc'd to quit his house and service, and wisely flies to Millwood for relief and entertainment.

Blunt. I have not heard of this before : how did she receive him ?

Lucy. As you would expect. She wonder'd what he meant, was astonish'd at his impudence, and with an air of modesty peculiar to herself, swore so heartily that she never saw him before, that she put me out of countenance.

Blunt. That's much indeed ! But how did Barnwell behave ?

Lucy. He grieved ; and at length, enraged at this barbarous treatment, was preparing to be gone ; and making towards the door, shew'd a sum of money, which he had brought from his master's, the last he is ever likely to have from thence.

Blunt. But then, Millwood ?

Lucy. Ay, she, with her usual address, returned to her old arts of lying, swearing, and dissembling ; hung on his neck, wept and swore 'twas meant in jest. The amorous youth melted into tears, threw the money into her lap, and swore he had rather die than think her false.

Blunt. Strange infatuation !

Lucy. But what ensued was stranger still. As doubts and fears, followed by reconciliation, ever increase love where the passion is sincere ; so in him it caus'd so wild a transport of excessive fondness, such joy, such grief, such pleasure, and such anguish, that nature seem'd sinking with the weight, and his charm'd soul disposed to quit his breast for hers. Just then, when every passion with lawless anarchy prevail'd, and reason was in the raging tempest lost, the cruel, artful Millwood prevail'd upon the wretched youth to promise——what I tremble but to think on.

Blunt. I am amaz'd ! What can it be ?

Lucy. You will be more so, to hear it is to attempt the life of his nearest relation, and best benefactor.—

Blunt. His uncle ! whom we have often heard him speak of, as a gentleman of a large estate, and fair character, in the country where he lives !

Lucy.

Lucy. The same. She was no sooner possessed of the last dear purchase of his ruin ; but her avarice, insatiate as the grave, demanded this horrid sacrifice. Barnwell's near relation, ' and unsuspected virtue, must give too ' easy means to seize this good man's treasure ;' whose blood must seal the dreadful secret, and prevent the terrors of her guilty fears.

Blunt. Is it possible she could persuade him to do an act like that ? He is by nature honest, grateful, compassionate, and generous ; ' and tho' his love, and her ' artful persuasions, have wrought him to practise what ' he most abhors ; yet we all can witness for him, with ' what reluctance he has still complied : so many tears ' he shed o'er each offence, as might, if possible, sanctify ' theft, and make a merit of a crime.'

Lucy. 'Tis true, at the naming of the murder of his uncle he started into rage ; and, breaking from her arms, (where she till then had held him with well-dissembled love, and false endearments) called her cruel, monster, devil, and told her she was born for his destruction. She thought it not for her purpose to meet his rage with her rage, but affected a most passionate fit of grief, railed at her fate, and curs'd her wayward stars, that still her wants should force her to press him to act such deeds, as she must needs abhor as well as he. She told him necessity had no law, and love no bounds ; that therefore he never truly lov'd, but meant, in her necessity, to forsake her. Then she kneel'd, and swore, that since by his refusal he had given her cause to doubt his love, she never would see him more, unless, to prove it true, he robb'd his uncle to supply her wants, and murder'd him to keep it from discovery.

Blunt. I am astonished ! What said he ?

Lucy. Speechless he stood ; but in his face you might have read, that various passions tore his very soul. Oft he in anguish threw his eyes towards Heaven, ' and then ' as often bent their beams on her ;' then wept and groan'd, and beat his troubled breast ; at length, with horror not to be express'd, he cry'd, Thou cursed fair, have I not given dreadful proofs of love ? What drew me from my youthful innocence, and stain'd my then unspotted soul, but love ? What caused me to rob my worthy, gentle master,

master, but curst love? What makes me now a fugitive from his service, loath'd by myself, and scorn'd by all the world, but love? What fills my eyes with tears, my soul with torture never felt on this side death before? Why love, love, love! And why, above all, do I resolve (for tearing his hear, he cried, I do resolve) to kill my uncle?

Blunt. Was she not moved? It makes me weep to hear the sad relation.

Lucy. Yes—with joy, that she had gain'd her point. She gave him no time to cool, but urg'd him to attempt it instantly. He's now gone. If he performs it, and escapes, there's more money for her; if not, he'll ne'er return, and then she's fairly rid of him.

Blunt. 'Tis time the world were rid of such a monster.

Lucy. If we don't use our endeavours to prevent the murder, we are as bad as she.

Blunt. I am afraid it is too late.

Lucy. Perhaps not. Her barbarity to Barnwell makes me hate her. We have run too great a length with her already. I did not think her or myself so wicked, as I find, upon reflection, we are.

Blunt. 'Tis true, we have been all too much so. But there is something so horrid in murder, that all other crimes seem nothing when compared to that; I would not be involv'd in the guilt of it for all the world,

Lucy. Nor I, Heaven knows. Therefore let us clear ourselves, by doing all that is in our power to prevent it. I have just thought of a way that to me seems probable. Will you join with me to detect this curst design?

Blunt. With all my heart. He who knows of a murder intended to be committed, and does not discover it, in the eye of the law and reason, is a murderer.

Lucy. Let us lose no time; I'll acquaint you with the particulars as we go. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE, *a walk at some distance from a country seat.*

Enter Barnwell.

Barn. A dismal gloom obscures the face of day. Either the sun has slipp'd behind a cloud, or journeys down the west of Heaven with more than common speed, to avoid the sight of what I am doom'd to act. Since I set forth on this accur'd design, where'er I tread, methinks, the
solid

solid earth trembles beneath my feet. *Murder my uncle!*
 —‘ Yonder limpid stream, whose hoary fall has made a
 ‘ natural cascade, as I pass’d by, in doleful accents seem’d
 ‘ to murmur——murder! The earth, the air, and water
 ‘ seem’d concern’d. But that’s not strange: the world
 ‘ is punish’d, and nature feels a shock, when Providence
 ‘ permits a good man’s fall. Just Heaven! then what
 ‘ should I feel for him that was’ my father’s only brother,
 and since his death has been to me a father; that took me
 up an infant and an orphan, rear’d me with tenderest care,
 and still indulg’d me with most paternal fondness? Yet
 here I stand his destin’d murderer——I stiffen with hor-
 ror at my own impiety——’Tis yet unperform’d—What
 if I quit my bloody purpose, and fly the place? [*Going,*
then stops.] ——But whither, Oh, whither shall I fly?
 My master’s once friendly doors are ever shut against me;
 and without money Millwood will never see me more;
 and she has got such firm possession of my heart, and go-
 verns there with such despotic sway, that life is not to be
 endured without her. Ay, there’s the cause of all my
 sin and sorrow: ’tis more than love; it is the fever of
 the soul, and madness of desire. In vain does nature, rea-
 son, conscience, all oppose it; the impetuous passion
 bears down all before it, and drives me on to lust, to theft
 and murder. Oh, conscience! feeble guide to virtue,
 thou only shew’st us when we go astray, but wantest
 power to stop us in our course!—Ha! in yonder shady
 walk I see my uncle——He’s alone——Now for my dis-
 guise. [*Plucks out a vizar.*]——This is his hour of pri-
 vate meditation. Thus daily he prepares his soul for
 Heaven; while I——But what have I to do with Hea-
 ven? Ha! no struggles, conscience!——

Hence, hence remorse, and every thought that’s good;
 The storm that lust began, must end in blood.

[*Puts on the vizar, draws a pistol, and exits.*

SCENE, a close walk in a wood.

Enter Uncle.

Un. If I were superstitious, I should fear some danger
 lurk’d unseen, or death were nigh. A heavy melancholy
 clouds my spirits. My imagination is fill’d with ghastly
 forms of dreary graves, and bodies chang’d by death;

D

when

when the pale lengthen'd visage attracts each weeping eye, and fills the musing soul at once with grief and horror, pity and aversion. I will indulge the thought. The wise man prepares himself for death, by making it familiar to his mind. When strong reflections hold the mirror near, and the living in the dead behold their future self; how does each inordinate passion and desire cease, or sicken at the view! The mind scarce moves; the blood, curdling and chill'd, creeps slowly thro' the veins: fix'd, still, and motionless we stand, so like the solemn object of our thoughts, we are almost at present what we must be hereafter; till curiosity awakes the soul, and sets it on enquiry.

Enter George Barnwell, at a distance.

Oh, Death! thou strange, mysterious power; seen every day, yet never understood, but by the incommunicative dead, what art thou? The extensive mind of man, that with a thought circles the earth's vast globe, sinks to the centre, or ascends above the stars; that worlds exotic finds, or thinks it finds, thy thick clouds attempts to pass in vain; lost and bewildered in the horrid gloom, defeated, she returns more doubtful than before, of nothing certain but of labour lost.

[During this speech Barnwell sometimes presents the pistol, and draws it back again.]

Barn. Oh, 'tis impossible! *[Throwing down the pistol.]*

[Uncle starts, and attempts to draw his sword.]

Uncle. A man so near me! arm'd and mask'd——

Barn. Nay, then, there's no retreat.

[Plucks a poignard from his bosom, and stabs him.]

Uncle. Oh, I am slain! All gracious Heaven, regard the prayer of thy dying servant; bless, with the choicest blessings, my dearest nephew; forgive my murderer, and take my fleeting soul to endless mercy.

[Barnwell throws off his mask, runs to him, and kneeling by him, raises and chafes him.]

Barn. Expiring saint! Oh, murder'd, martyr'd uncle! lift up your dying eyes, and view your nephew in your murderer.——Oh, do not look so tenderly upon me——Let indignation lighten from your eyes, and blast me ere you die——By Heaven, he weeps, in pity of my woes.——Tears, tears, for blood——The murder'd, in the agonies

gonies of death, weeps for his murderer.—Oh, speak your pious purpose; pronounce my pardon then, and take me with you—He would, but cannot.—Oh, why, with such fond affection, do you press my murdering hand?—[*Uncle sighs and dies.*] ‘What will you kiss me?’ Life that hovered on his lips but till he had sealed my pardon, in that sigh expired. He’s gone for ever—and, Oh! I follow—[*Swoons away upon his uncle’s dead body.*] Do I still breathe, and taint with my infectious breath the wholesome air?—Let heaven from its high throne, in justice or in mercy now look down on that dear murdered saint, and me the murderer, and if his vengeance spares, let pity strike and end my wretched being.—Murder the worst of crimes, and parricide the worst of murders, and this the worst of parricides. ‘Cain, who stands on record from the birth of time, and must to its last final period, as accursed, slew a brother favoured above him: detested Nero, by another’s hand, dispatched a mother that he feared and hated: but I, with my own hand, have murdered a brother, mother, father, and a friend most loving and beloved.—This execrable act of mine is without a parallel.—Oh, may it ever stand alone, the last of murders as it is the worst!’

- ‘The rich man thus, in torment and despair,
 - ‘Preferr’d his vain, his charitable prayer.’
 - ‘The fool; his own soul lost, wou’d fain be wise
 - ‘For others good; but heaven his suit denies.
 - ‘By laws and means well known we stand or fall;
 - ‘And one eternal rule remains for all.’
- Oh, may it ever stand alone accurst,
The last of murders as it is the worst.*

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE, *a room in Thorowgood's house.**Enter Maria meeting Trueman.*

MARIA.

‘ **H**OW falsely do they judge, who censure or applaud,
 ‘ as we’re afflicted or rewarded here? I know I
 ‘ am unhappy; yet cannot charge myself with any crime,
 ‘ more than the common frailties of our kind, that
 ‘ should provoke just heaven to mark me out for suffer-
 ‘ ings so uncommon and severe. Falsely to accuse our-
 ‘ selves, heaven must abhor. Then it is just and right
 ‘ that innocence should suffer; for heaven must be just in
 ‘ all its ways. Perhaps by that we are kept from moral
 ‘ evils, much worse than penal, or more improved in
 ‘ virtue. Or may not the lesser ills that we sustain be
 ‘ made the means of greater good to others? Might all
 ‘ the joyless days and sleepless nights that I have past,
 ‘ but purchase peace for thee.

‘ Thou dear, dear cause of all my grief and pain;

‘ Small were the loss, and infinite the gain,

‘ Though to the grave in secret love I pine,

‘ So life and fame, and happiness were thine.’

Ma. What news of Barnwell?

Tr. None; I have sought him with the greatest diligence, but all in vain.

Ma. Does my father yet suspect the cause of his absence?

Tr. All appeared so just and fair to him, it is not possible he ever should. But his absence will no longer be concealed. Your father is wise; and though he seems to hearken to the friendly excuses I would make for Barnwell, yet, I am afraid he regards ’em only as such, without suffering them to influence his judgment.

‘ *Mar.* How does the unhappy youth defeat all our
 ‘ designs to serve him? yet I can never repent what we
 ‘ have done. Should he return, ’twill make his recon-
 ‘ ciliation with my father easier, and preserve him from
 ‘ future reproach of a malicious unforgiving world.’

Enter

Enter Thorowgood and Lucy.

Thor. This woman here has given me a sad, and, being some circumstances, too probable an account of Barnwell's defection.

Lucy. I am sorry, Sir, that my frank confession of my former unhappy course of life, should cause you to suspect my truth on this occasion.

Thor. It is not that; your confession has in it all the appearance of truth. Among many other particulars, she informs me, that Barnwell has been influenced to break his trust, and wrong me at several times, of considerable sums of money. Now as I know this to be false, I would fain doubt the whole of her relation, too dreadful to be willingly believed.

Ma. Sir, your pardon; I find myself on a sudden so indispos'd that I must retire. 'Providence opposes all attempts to save him,' Poor ruined Barnwell! Wretched, lost Maria!

[Aside. Exit Maria.]

Thor. How am I distressed on every side? Pity for that unhappy youth, fear for the life of a much valued friend,——and then my child——the only joy and hope of my declining life!——Her melancholy increases hourly, and gives me painful apprehensions of her loss——Oh, Trueman, this person informs me that your friend, at the instigation of an impious woman, is gone to rob and murder his venerable uncle.

Tr. Oh, execrable deed! I am blasted with the horror of the thought!

Lucy. This delay may ruin all.

Thor. What to do or think, I know not, That he ever wrong'd me, I know is false; the rest may be so too; there's all my hope.

Tr. Trust not to that; rather suppose all true, than lose a moment's time. Even now the horrid deed may be doing—dreadful imagination!——or it may be done; and we be vainly debating on the means to prevent what is already past.

Thor. This earnestness convinces me, that he knows more than he has yet discovered. What, ho! without there, who waits?

Enter a Servant.

Order the groom to saddle the swiftest horse, and prepare

pare to set out with speed; an affair of life and death demands his diligence. [*Exit Servant.*] For you, whose behaviour on this occasion I have no time to commend as it deserves, I must engage your further assistance. Return and observe this Millwood till I come. I have your directions, and will follow you as soon as possible. [*Exit Lucy.*] Trueman, you, I am sure, will not be idle on this occasion. [*Exit Thorowgood.*

Tr. He only who is a friend can judge of my distresses.

[*Exit.*

SCENE, Millwood's House.

Enter Millwood.

Mill. I wish I knew the event of his design. The attempt without success would ruin him. Well; what have I to apprehend from that? I fear too much. The mischief being only intended, his friends, through pity of his youth, turn all their rage on me. I should have thought of that before. Suppose the deed done; then, and then only, I shall be secure—Or what if he returns without attempting it at all!—

Enter Barnwell bloody.

But he is here, and I have done him wrong. His bloody hands shew he has done the deed, but shew he wants the prudence to conceal it.

Barn. Where shall I hide me? Whither shall I fly, to avoid the swift unerring hand of justice?

Mill. Dismiss your fears: though thousands had pursued you to the door, yet being entered here, you are as safe as innocence. I have a cavern, by art so cunningly contrived, that the piercing eyes of jealousy and revenge may search in vain, nor find the entrance to the safe retreat. There will I hide you, if any danger's near.

Barn. Oh, hide me—from myself if it be possible; for while I bear my conscience in my bosom, though I were hid where man's eye never saw, nor light e'er dawn'd, 'twere all in vain. For, Oh, that inmate, that impartial judge, will try, convict, and sentence me for murder, and execute me with never-ending torments. Behold these hands, all crimsoned o'er with my dear uncle's blood. Here's a sight to make a statue start with horror, or turn a living man into a statue!

Mil. Ridiculous! Then it seems you are afraid of your own shadow, or what's less than a shadow, your conscience.

Barn. Though to man unknown I did the accursed act, what can we hide from heaven's all-seeing eye?

Mil. No more of this stuff! What advantage have you made of his death; or what advantage may yet be made of it? Did you secure the keys of his treasure, which, no doubt, were about him? What gold, what jewels, or what else of value have you brought me?

Barn. Think you I added sacrifice to murder! Oh, had you seen him as his life flowed from him in a crimson flood, and heard him praying for me by the double name of nephew and of murderer; (alas, alas, he knew not then, that his nephew was his murderer!) how would you have wish'd, as I did, though you had a thousand years of life to come, to have give them all to have lengthened his one hour. But being dead, I fled the sight of what my hands done; nor could I, to have gained the empire of the world, have violated, by theft, his sacred corpse.

Mil. Whining, preposterous, canting villain! to murder your uncle, rob him of life, nature's first, last, dear prerogative, after which there's no injury, then fear to take what he no longer wanted, and bring to me your penury and guilt. Do you think I'll hazard my reputation, nay, my life, to entertain you?

Barn. Oh, Millwood!—this from thee?—But I have done. If you hate me, if you wish me dead, then are you happy; for, Oh, 'tis sure my grief will quickly end me.

Mil. In his madness he will discover all, and involve me in his ruin. We are on a precipice from whence there's no retreat for both.—Then to preserve myself ———[*Pauses.*]———There is no other way.———'Tis dreadful, but reflection comes too late when danger's pressing, and there's no room for choice.———It must be done. [*Aside. Rings a bell, enter a servant.*] Fetch me an officer, and seize this villain. He has confess'd himself a murderer. Should I let him escape; I might justly be thought as bad as he. [*Exit servant.*]

Barn. Oh, Millwood! sure you do not, you cannot mean

mean it. Stop the messenger; upon my knees, I beg you'd call him back. 'Tis fit I die indeed, but not by you. I will this instant deliver myself into the hands of justice, indeed I will; for death is all I wish. But thy ingratitude so tears my wounded soul, 'tis worse ten thousand times than death with torture.

Mil. Call it what you will; I am willing to live, and live secure, which nothing but your death can warrant.

Barn. If there be a pitch of wickedness that sets the author beyond the reach of vengeance, you must be secure. But what remains for me, but a dismal dungeon, hard galling fetters, an awful trial, and an ignominious death, justly to fall upstied and abhorred? 'After death to be suspended between heaven and earth, a dreadful spectacle, the warning and horror of a gaping croud!' This I could bear. nay, with not to avoid, had it but come from any hand but thine.

Enter Blunt, officer, and attendants.

Mil. Heaven defend me! Conceal a murderer! Here, Sir, take this youth into your custody, I accuse him of murder, and will appear to make good my charge.

[They seize him.]

Barn. To whom, of what, or how shall I complain? I'll not accuse her. The hand of heaven is in it, and this the punishment of lust and parricide. 'Yet heaven, that justly cuts me off, still suffers her to live, perhaps to punish others. Tremendous mercy!' So fiends are curs'd with immortality to be the executioners of heaven.'

Be warn'd, ye youths, who see my sad despair:

Avoid lewd women, false as they are fair.

'By reason guided, honest joys pursue:

'The fair to honour, and to virtue true,

'Just to herself, will ne'er be false to you.'

By my example learn to shun my fate:

(How wretched is the man who's wife too late!)

Ere innocence, and fame, and life be lost,

Here purchase wisdom cheaply, at my cost.

[Exit Barnwell, officer, and attendants.]

Mil. Where's Lucy? Why is she absent at such a time?

Blunt.

Blunt. Would I had been so too! Lucy will soon be here; and I hope to thy confusion, thou devil!

Mil. Insolent! This to me?

Blunt. The worst that we know of the devil is, that he first seduces to sin, and then betrays to punishment.

[*Exit Blunt.*

Mil. They disapprove of my conduct then, 'and mean to take this opportunity to set up for themselves'—My ruin is resolved.—I see my danger, but scorn both it and them. I was not born to fall by such weak instruments. [*Going.*

Enter Thorowgood.

Thor. Where is the scandal of her own sex, and curse of ours?

Mil. What means this insolence? Whom do you seek?

Thor. Millwood.

Mil. Well, you have found her then. I am Millwood.

Thor. Then you are the most impious wretch that e'er the sun beheld.

Mil. From your appearance I should have expected wisdom and moderation, but your manners belie your aspect. What is your business here? I know you not.

Thor. Hereafter you may know me better; I am Barnwell's master.

Mil. Then you are master to a villain, which, I think, is not much to your credit.

Thor. Had he been as much above thy arts, as my credit is superior to thy malice, I need not have blushed to own him.

Mil. My arts! I don't understand you, Sir; if he has done amiss, what's that to me? Was he my servant, or yours? You should have taught him better.

Thor. Why should I wonder to find such uncommon impudence in one arriv'd to such a height of wickedness? 'When innocence is banished, modesty soon follows.' Know, forcerers, I'm not ignorant of any of the arts by which you first deceived the unwary youth. I know how, step by step, you've led him on, reluctant and unwilling, from crime to crime, to this last horrid act, which

which you contrived, and by your cursed wiles even forced him to commit.

Mil. Ha! Lucy has got the advantage, and accused me first. Unless I can turn the accusation, and fix it upon her and Blunt, I am lost. [*Aside.*]

Thor. Had I known your cruel design sooner, it had been prevented. To see you punished, as the law directs, is all that now remains. Poor satisfaction! for he, innocent as he is, compared to you, must suffer too. 'But heaven who knows our frame, and graciously distinguishes between frailty and presumption, will make a difference, though man cannot, who sees not the heart, but only judges by the outward action.'

Mil. I find, Sir, we are both unhappy in our servants. I was surprized at such ill treatment without cause from a gentleman of your appearance, and therefore too hastily returned it: for which I ask your pardon. I now perceive you have been so far imposed on, as to think me engaged in a former correspondence with your servant, and some way or other accessory to his undoing.

Thor. I charge you as the cause, the sole cause of all his guilt, and all his suffering, of all he now endures, and must endure, till a violent and shameful death shall put a dreadful period to his life and miseries together.

Mil. 'Tis very strange! But who's secure from scandal and detraction? So far from contributing to his ruin, I never spoke to him till since this fatal accident, which I lament as much as you. 'Tis true, I have a servant, on whose account he hath of late frequented my house. If she has abused my good opinion of her, am I to blame? Has not Barnwell done the same by you?

Thor. I hear you; pray go on.

Mil. I have been informed he had a violent passion for her, and she for him: but till now I always thought it innocent. I know her poor, and given to expensive pleasures. Now, who can tell but she may have influenced the amorous youth to commit this murder to supply her extravagancies.——It must be so. I now recollect a thousand circumstances that confirm it. I'll have her, and a man servant whom I suspect as an accomplice, secured immediately. I hope, Sir, you will lay

lay aside your ill-grounded suspicions of me, and join to punish the real contrivers of this bloody deed.

[Offers to go.

Thor. Madam, you pass not this way: I see your design, but shall protect them from your malice.

Mil. I hope you will not use your influence, and the credit of your name to screen such guilty wretches. Consider, Sir, the wickedness of persuading a thoughtless youth to such a crime.

Thor. I do — and of betraying him when it was done.

Mil. That which you call betraying him may convince you of my innocence. She who loves him, though she contrived the murder, would never have delivered him into the hands of justice, as I, struck with horror at his crimes, have done.

Thor. How should an unexperienced youth escape her snares? 'The powerful magic of her wit and form might betray the wisest to simple dotage, and fire the blood that age had froze long since.' Even I, that with just prejudice came prepared, had by her artful story been deceived, but that my strong conviction of her guilt makes even a doubt impossible. [*Aside.*] Those whom subtilly you would accuse, you know are your accusers; and, which proves unanswerably their innocence and your guilt, they accused you before the deed was done, and did all that was in their power to prevent it.

Mil. Sir, you are very hard to be convinced; but I have a proof, which, when produced, will silence all objections.

[Exit Millwood.

Enter Lucy, Trueman, Blunt, officers, &c.

Lucy. Gentlemen, pray place yourselves, some on one side of that door, and some on the other; watch her entrance, and act as your prudence shall direct you. This way, [*To Thorowgood.*] and note her behaviour. I have observed her, she's driven to the last extremity, and is forming some desperate resolution. I guess at her design.

Re-enter Millwood with a pistol, Trueman secures her.

Tr. Here thy power of doing mischief ends, deceitful, cruel, bloody woman!

Mil. Fool, hypocrite, villain, man! thou canst not call me that.

Tr.

Tr. To call thee woman were to wrong thy sex, thou devil!

Mil. That imaginary being is an emblem of thy cursed sex collected. A mirror, wherein each particular man may see his own likeness, and that of all mankind.

Thor. Think not by aggravating the faults of others to extenuate thy own, of which the abuse of such uncommon perfections of mind and body is not the least.

Mil. If such I had, well may I curse your barbarous sex; who robbed me of 'em ere I knew their worth; then left me, too late, to count their value by their loss. Another and another spoiler came, and all my gain was poverty and reproach. My soul disdain'd, and yet disdains, dependance and contempt. Riches, no matter by what means obtained, I saw secured the worst of men from both, I found it therefore necessary to be rich, and to that end I summoned all my arts. You call 'em wicked, be it so, they were such as my conversation with your sex had furnished me withal.

Thor. Sure none but the worst of men conversed with thee.

Mil. Men of all degrees, and all professions, I have known, yet found no difference, but in their several capacities; all were alike wicked to the utmost of their power. ' In pride, contention, avarice, cruelty, and ' revenge, the reverend priesthood were my unerring ' guides. From suburb magistrates, who live by ruined ' reputations, as the unhospitable natives of Cornwall do ' by shipwrecks, I learned, that to charge my innocent ' neighbours with my crimes, was to merit their protection: for to screen the guilty is the less scandalous, ' when many are suspected; and detraction, like darkness and death, blackens all objects and levels all distinction. Such are your venal magistrates, who favour ' none but such as by their office they are sworn to punish. ' With them, not to be guilty is the worst of crimes, and ' large fees privately paid are every needful virtue.

Thor. Your practice has sufficiently discovered your contempt of laws, both human and divine; no wonder then that you should hate the officers of both.

Mil. I know you, and I hate you all; I expect no mercy, and I ask for none; I followed my inclinations,
and

and that the best of you do every day. ' All actions
' seem alike natural and indifferent to man and beast, who
' devour, or are devoured, as they meet, with others
' weaker or stronger than themselves.

' *Thor.* What pity it is a mind so comprehensive, dar-
' ing, and inquisitive, should be a stranger to religion's
' sweet and powerful charms !

' *Mil.* I am not fool enough to be an atheist, though
' I have known enough of men's hypocrisy to make a
' thousand simple women so. Whatever religion is in
' itself, as practised by mankind, it has caused the evils
' you say it was designed to cure. War, plague, and
' famine have not destroyed so many of the human race,
' as this pretended piety has done ; and with such bar-
' barous cruelty, as if the only way to honour heaven
' were to turn the present world into hell.

' *Thor.* Truth is truth, though from an enemy, and
' spoken in malice. You bloody, blind, and superstitious
' bigots, how will you answer this ?

' *Mil.* What are your laws, of which you make your
boast, but the fool's wisdom, and the coward's valour,
the instrument and screen of all your villanies ? By
them you punish in others what you act yourselves, or
would have acted, had you been in their circumstances.
The judge, who condemns the poor man for being a
thief, had been a thief himself had he been poor.
Thus you go on deceiving and being deceived, harrasing,
plaguings, and destroying one another. But women are
your universal prey.

Women, by whom you are, the source of joy,
With cruel arts you labour to destroy :
A thousand ways our ruin you pursue,
Yet blame in us those arts first taught by you.
Oh, may from hence each violated maid,
By flattering, faithless, barb'rous man betray'd,
When robb'd of innocence, and virgin fame,
From your destruction raise a nobler name,
To avenge their sex's wrongs devote their mind,
And future Millwoods prove to plague mankind.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FOURTH ACT.

E

ACT

A C T V.

‘ SCENE, *a room in a prison.*

‘ *Enter Thorowgood, Blunt, and Lucy.*

‘ THOROWGOOD.

‘ I Have recommended to Barnwell a reverend divine,
‘ whose judgment and integrity I am well acquainted
‘ with. Nor has Millwood been neglected; but she,
‘ unhappy woman, still obstinate, refuses his assistance.

‘ *Lucy.* This pious charity to the afflicted well be-
‘ comes your character; yet pardon me, Sir, if I won-
‘ der you were not at their trial.

‘ *Thor.* I knew it was impossible to save him; and I
‘ and my family bear so great a part in his distress, that
‘ to have been present would but have aggravated our
‘ sorrows without relieving his.

‘ *Blunt.* It was mournful indeed. Barnwell’s youth
‘ and modest deportment, as he passed, drew tears from
‘ every eye. When placed at the bar, and arraigned be-
‘ fore the reverend judges, with many tears and inter-
‘ rupting sobs, he confessed and aggravated his offences,
‘ without accusing, or once reflecting on Millwood, the
‘ shameless author of his ruin. But she, dauntless and
‘ unconcerned, stood by his side, viewing with visible
‘ pride and contempt the vast assembly, who all with
‘ sympathizing sorrow wept for the wretched youth.
‘ Millwood, when called upon to answer, loudly insisted
‘ upon her innocence, and made an artful and a bold
‘ defence; but finding all in vain, the impartial jury
‘ and the learned bench concurring to find her guilty,
‘ how did she curse herself, poor Barnwell, us, her
‘ judges, all mankind. But what could that avail?
‘ She was condemned, and is this day to suffer with
‘ him.

‘ *Thor.* The time draws on. I am going to visit
‘ Barnwell, as you are Millwood.

‘ *Lucy.* We have not wronged her, yet I dread this in-
‘ terview. She’s proud, impatient, wrathful, and un-
‘ forgiving. To be the branded instruments of ven-
‘ geance, to suffer in her shame, and sympathize with
‘ her

her in all she suffers, is the tribute we must pay for our former ill-spent lives, and long confederacy with her in wickedness.

Thor. Happy for you it ended when it did. What you have done against Millwood I know proceeded from a just abhorrence of her crimes, free from interest, malice, or revenge. Profelytes to virtue should be encouraged; pursue your purposed reformation, and know me hereafter for your friend.

Lacy. This is a blessing as un hoped for as unmerited. But heaven, that snatched us from impending ruin, sure intends you as its instrument to secure us from apostacy.

Thor. With gratitude to impute your deliverance to heaven is just. Many less virtuously disposed than Barnwell was, have never fallen in the manner he has done. May not such owe their safety rather to Providence than to themselves? With pity and compassion let us judge him. Great were his faults, but strong was the temptation. Let his ruin teach us diffidence, humanity, and circumspection; for if we, who wonder at his fate, had like him been tried, like him perhaps we had fallen.

SCENE, *a dungeon, a table, and a lamp.* Barnwell reading.

Enter Thorowgood at a distance.

Thor. There see the bitter fruits of passion's detested reign, and sensual appetite indulged; severe reflections, penitence, and tears.

Barn. My honoured, injured master, whose goodness has covered me a thousand times with shame, forgive this last unwilling disrespect. Indeed I saw you not.

Thor. 'Tis well; I hope you are better employed in viewing of yourself; 'your journey's long, your time for preparation almost spent.' I sent a reverend divine to teach you to improve it, and should be glad to hear of his success.

Barn. The word of truth, which he recommended for my constant companion in this my sad retirement, has at length removed the doubts I laboured under. From thence I've learned the infinite extent of heavenly mercy; that my offences, though great, are not unpardonable.

donable: and that 'tis not my interest only, but my duty, to believe and to rejoice in my hope. So shall heaven receive the glory, and future penitents the profit of my example.

Thor. Proceed.

Barn. 'Tis wonderful that words should charm despair, speak peace and pardon to a murderer's conscience; but truth and mercy flow in every sentence, attended with force and energy divine. How shall I describe my present state of mind? I hope in doubt, and trembling I rejoice; I feel my grief increase, even as my fears give way. Joy and gratitude now supply more tears than the horror and anguish of despair before.

Thor. These are the genuine signs of true repentance; the only preparatory, the certain way to everlasting peace. 'Oh, the joy it gives to see a soul formed and prepared for heaven! For this the faithful minister devotes himself to meditation, abstinence, and prayer, shunning the vain delights of sensual joys, and daily dies, that others may live for ever. For this he turns the sacred volumes o'er, and spends his life in painful search of truth. The love of riches and the lust of power, he looks upon with just contempt and detestation; he only counts for wealth the souls he wins, and his highest ambition is to serve mankind. If the reward of all his pains be to preserve one soul from wandering, or turn one from the error of his ways, how does he then rejoice, and own his little labours overpaid!'

Barn. What do I owe for all your generous kindness? But though I cannot, heaven can and will reward you.

Thor. To see thee thus, is joy too great for words. Farewel.—Heaven strengthen thee:—Farewel.

Barn. Oh, Sir, there's something I would say, if my sad swelling heart would give me leave.

Thor. Give it vent a while, and try.

Barn. I had a friend—'tis true I am unworthy—yet methinks your generous example might persuade—Could I not see him once, before I go from whence there's no return?

Thor. He's coming, and as much thy friend as ever. I will not anticipate his sorrow; too soon he'll see the
sad

sad effect of this contagious ruin. This torrent of domestic misery bears too hard upon me. I must retire to indulge a weakness I find impossible to overcome. [*Aside.*] Much loved—and much lamented youth!—Farewel.—Heaven strengthen thee.—Eternally farewell.

Barn. The best of masters and of men—Farewel. While I live let me not want your prayers.

Thor. Thou shalt not. Thy peace being made with heaven, death is already vanquished. Bear a little longer the pains that attend this transitory life, and cease from pain for ever. [*Exit Thorowgood.*]

Barn. Perhaps I shall. I find a power within, that bears my soul above the fears of death, and, spite of conscious shame and guilt, gives me a taste of pleasure more than mortal.

Enter Trueman and Keeper.

Keep. Sir, there's the prisoner. [*Exit Keeper.*]

Barn. Trueman!—My friend, whom I so wished to see, yet now he's here, I dare not look upon him.

[*Weeps.*]

Tr. Oh, Barnwell! Barnwell!

Barn. Mercy! Mercy! gracious heaven! For death, but not for this, I was prepared.

Tr. What have I suffered since I saw thee last! What pain has absence given me!—But, Oh, to see thee thus! —

Barn. I know it is dreadful! I feel the anguish of thy generous soul:—But I was born to murder all who love me. [*Both weep.*]

Tr. I came not to reproach you; I thought to bring you comfort; but I'm deceived, for I have none to give. I came to share thy sorrow, but cannot bear my own.

Barn. My sense of guilt indeed you cannot know; 'tis what the good and innocent, like you, can ne'er conceive: but other griefs at present I have none, but what I feel for you. In your sorrow I read you love me still; but yet, methinks, 'tis strange, when I consider what I am.

Tr. No more of that; I can remember nothing but thy virtues, thy honest, tender friendship, our former happy state and present misery. Oh, had you trusted me

when first the fair seducer tempted you, all might have been prevented.

Barn. Alas, thou knowest not what a wretch I've been. Breach of friendship was my first and least offence. So far was I lost to goodness, so devoted to the author of my ruin, that had she insisted on my murdering thee, ——— I think ——— I should have done it.

Tr. Pr'ythee, aggravate thy faults no more.

Barn. I think I should! Thus good and generous as you are, I should have murdered you!

Tr. We have not yet embraced, and may be interrupted. Come to my arms.

Barn. Never, never will I taste such joys on earth; never will I soothe my just remorse. Are those honest arms and faithful bosom fit to embrace and to support a murderer? These iron fetters only shall clasp, and stony pavement bear me; [*throwing himself on the ground.*] Even these too good for such a bloody monster.

Tr. Shall fortune sever those whom friendship joined? Thy miseries cannot lay thee so low, but love will find thee. Here will we offer to stem calamity; this place the altar, and ourselves the sacrifice. Our mutual groans shall echo to each other through the dreary vault; our sighs shall number the moments as they pass, and mingling tears communicate such anguish, as words were never made to express.

Barn. Then be it so. [*Rising.*] Since you propose an intercourse of woe, pour all your griefs into my breast, and in exchange take mine. [*Embracing.*] Where's now the anguish that you promised? You've taken mine, and make me no return. Sure peace and comfort dwell within these arms, and sorrow can't approach me while I am here. 'This too is the work of heaven; which 'having before spoke peace and pardon to me, now sends 'thee to confirm it.' Oh, take, take some of the joy that overflows my breast!

Tr. I do, I do. Almighty power! how hast thou made us capable to bear at once the extremes of pleasure and of pain.

Enter Keeper.

Keeper. Sir.

Tr.

Fr. I come.

[Exit Keeper.

Barn. Must you leave me? Death would soon have parted us for ever.

Fr. Oh, my Barnwell! there's yet another task behind. Again your heart must bleed for others' woes.

Barn. To meet and part with you I thought was all I had to do on earth. What is there more for me to do or suffer?

Fr. I dread to tell thee, yet it must be known! Maria———

Barn. Our master's fair and virtuous daughter?——

Fr. The same.

Barn. No misfortune, I hope, has reached that maid? Preserve her, heaven, from every ill, to shew mankind that goodness is your care.

Fr. Thy, thy misfortune, my unhappy friend, have reached her. Whatever you and I have felt, and more, if more be possible, she feels for you.

Barn. 'I know he doth abhor a lie, and would not trifle with his dying friend.' This is indeed the bitterness of death. [Aside.

Fr. You must remember (for we all observed it) for some time past, a heavy melancholy weighed her down. Disconsolate she seemed, and pined and languished from a cause unknown; till, hearing of your dreadful fate, the long-sifted flame blazed out; 'she wept, and wrung her hands, and tore her hair,' and in the transport of her grief discovered her own lost state, while she lamented yours.

Barn. 'Will all the pain I feel restore thy ease, lovely unhappy maid! [Weeping.]' Why did you not let me die, and never know it?

Fr. It was impossible. She makes no secret of her passion for you; she is determined to see you ere you die, and waits for me to introduce her.

[Exit Trueman.

Barn. Vain, busy thoughts, be still! What avails it to think on what I might have been? I now am——— what I've made myself.

Enter Trueman and Maria.

Fr. Madam, reluctant I lead you to this dismal scene. This is the seat of misery and guilt. Here awful justice reserves

reserves her publick victims. This is the entrance to a shameful death.

Ma. To this sad place then no improper guest, the abandoned lost Maria brings despair, and sees the subject and the cause of all this world of woe. Silent and motionless he stands, as if his soul had quitted her abode, and the lifeless form alone was left behind, "yet that so perfect, that beauty and death, ever at enmity, now seem united there."

Barn. "I groan, but murmur not." Just heaven! I am your own; do with me what you please.

Ma. Why are your streaming eyes still fix'd below, as though thou'dst give the greedy earth thy sorrows, and rob me of my due? Were happiness within your power, you should bestow it where you pleased; but in your misery I must and will partake.

Barn. Oh, say not so, but fly, abhor, and leave me to my fate. Consider what you are, "how vast your fortune, and how bright your fame. Have pity on your youth, your beauty, and unequalled virtue; for which so many noble peers have sigh'd in vain." Bless with your charms some honourable lord. "Adorn with your beauty, and by your example improve, the English court, that justly claims such merit:" so shall I quickly be to you——as though I had never been.

Ma. When I forget you, I must be so indeed. Reason, choice, virtue, all forbid it. Let women like Millwood, if there are more such women, smile in prosperity, and in adversity forsake. Be it the pride of virtue to repair, or to partake, the ruin such have made.

Tr. Lovely ill-fated maid! "Was there ever such generous distress before! How must this pierce his grateful heart, and aggravate his woes!"

Barn. Ere I knew guilt or shame, when fortune smiled, and when my youthful hopes were at the highest; if then to have rais'd my thoughts to you, had been presumption in me never to have been pardoned, think how much beneath yourself you condescend to regard me now.

Ma. Let her blush, who proffering love, invades the freedom of your sex's choice, and meanly sues in hopes

' hopes of a return. Your inevitable fate hath rendered hope impossible as vain. Then why should I fear to avow a passion so just and so disinterested ?

' *Tr.* If any should take occasion from Millwood's crimes to libel the best and fairest part of the creation, here let them see their error. The most distant hopes of such a tender passion from so bright a maid, might add to the happiness of the most happy, and make the greatest proud ; yet here 'tis lavished in vain. Though by the rich present the generous donor is undone, he on whom it is bestowed receives no benefit.

' *Barn.* So the aromatic spices of the east, which all the living covet and esteem, are with unavailing kindness wasted on the dead.'

Ma. Yes, fruitless is my love, and unavailing all my sighs and tears. Can they save thee from approaching death ? ——— from such a death ? ——— *Oh, sorrow insupportable !* ——— ' Oh, terrible idea ! What is her misery and distress, who sees the first, last object of her love, for whom alone she'd live, for whom she'd die a thousand thousand deaths, if it were possible, expiring in her arms ! Yet she is happy, when compared to me. Were millions of worlds mine, I'd gladly give them in exchange for her condition. The most consummate woe is light to mine. The last of curses to other miserable maids, is all I ask for my relief, and that's denied me.

' *Tr.* Time and reflection cure all ills.

' *Ma.* All but this. His dreadful catastrophe virtue herself abhors. To give a holiday to suburb slaves, and passing entertain the savage herd, who elbowing each other for a sight, pursue and press upon him like his fate ? ——— A mind with piety and resolution armed may smile on death : ——— But public ignominy, everlasting shame, shame the death of souls, to die a thousand times, and yet survive even death itself in never-dying infamy ——— Is this to be endured ? ——— Can I who live in him, and must each hour of my devoted life feel all these woes renewed. ——— Can I endure this ?

' *Tr.* Grief has so impaired her spirits, she pants, as in the agonies of death.'

Barn.

58 GEORGE BARNWELL.

Barn. Preserve her, heaven, and restore her peace, nor let her death be added to my crimes. [*Bell tolls.*] I am summoned to my fate.

Enter Keeper.

Kerp. Sir, the officers attend you. Millwood is already summoned.

Barn. Tell 'em, I'm ready. And now, my friend, farewell. [*Embracing.*] Support and comfort, the best you can, this mourning fair.——No more——Forget not to pray for me. [*Turning to Maria.*] Would you, bright excellence, permit me the honour of a chaste embrace, the last happiness this world could give were mine. [*She inclines towards him, they embrace.*] Exalted goodness! Oh, turn your eyes from earth and me to heaven, where virtue, like yours, is ever heard. Pray for the peace of my departing soul. Early my race of wickedness began, and soon I reached the summit. 'Ere nature has finished her work, and stamped me man, just at the time when others begin to stray, my course is finished. Though short my span of life, and few my days; yet count my crimes for years, and I have lived whole ages.' Thus justice, in compassion to mankind, cuts off a wretch like me; by one such example to secure thousands from future ruin. 'Justice and mercy are in heaven the same: Its utmost severity is mercy to the whole; thereby to cure man's folly and presumption, which else would render even infinite mercy vain and ineffectual.'

If any youth like you in future times
Shall mourn my fate, tho' he abhors my crimes,
Or tender maid like you my tale shall hear,
And to my sorrows give a pitying tear;
To each such melting eye and throbbing heart,
Would gracious heaven this benefit impart,
Never to know my guilt, nor feel my pain,
Then must you own, you ought not to complain,
Since you nor weep, nor shall I die in vain.

[*Exeunt Barnwell and Officers.*]

SCENE,

- SCENE, *the place of execution. The gallows and ladder at the farther end of the stage. A crowd of spectators.*
- Blunt and Lucy.

• *Lucy.* Heavens! What a throng!

• *Blunt.* How terrible is death when thus prepared.

• *Lucy.* Support them, heaven! thou only canst support them; all other help is vain.

• *Officer.* [*Within.*] Make way there; make way, and give the prisoners room.

• *Lucy.* They are here. Observe them well. How humble and composed young Barnwell seems; but Millwood looks wild, ruffled with passion, confounded and amazed.

• *Enter Barnwell, Millwood, Officers, and Executioners.*

• *Barn.* See, Millwood, see, our journey's at an end.

• Life, like a tale that's told, is passed away. That short, but dark and unknown passage, death, is all the space between us and endless joys, or woes eternal.

• *Mil.* Is this the end of all my flattering hopes? Were youth and beauty given me for a curse, and wisdom only to insure my ruin? They were, they were! Heaven, thou hast done thy worst. Or, if thou hast in store some untried plague, somewhat that's worse than shame, despair, and death, unpitied death, confirmed despair, and soul-confounding shame; something that men and angels can't describe, and only fiends, who bear it, can conceive; now, pour it now on this devoted head, that I may feel the worst thou canst inflict, and bid defiance to thy utmost power.

• *Barn.* Yet ere we pass the dreadful gulph of death, yet ere you're plunged in everlasting woe, Oh, bend your stubborn knees, and harder heart, humbly to deprecate the wrath divine. Who knows, but heaven, in your dying moments, may bestow that grace and mercy which your life despised?

• *Mil.* Why name you mercy to a wretch like me? Mercy is beyond my hope, almost beyond my wish. I can't repent, nor ask to be forgiven.

• *Barn.* Oh, think what 'tis to be for ever, ever miserable, nor with vain pride oppose a power that's able to destroy you.

' *Mil.* That will destroy me : I feel it will. A deluge of wrath is pouring on my soul. Chains, darkness, wheels, racks, sharp-stinged scorpions, molten lead, and whole seas of sulphur, are light to what I feel.

' *Barn.* Oh, add not to your vast account despair : a sin more injurious to heaven, than all you've yet committed.

' *Mil.* Oh, I have sinned beyond the reach of mercy !

' *Barn.* Oh, say not so ; 'tis blasphemy to think it. As yon bright roof is higher than the earth, so and much more does heaven's goodness pass our apprehension. Oh, what created being shall presume to circumscribe mercy that knows no bounds ?

' *Mil.* This yields no hope. Though pity may be boundless, yet 'tis free. I was doomed before the world began to endless pains, and thou to joys eternal.

' *Barn.* Oh, gracious heaven ! extend thy pity to her ; let thy rich mercy flow in plenteous streams to chase her fears and heal her wounded soul.

' *Mil.* It will not be : your prayers are lost in air, or else returned perhaps with double blessings to your bosom : they help not me.

' *Barn.* Yet hear me, Millwood.

' *Mil.* Away, I will not hear thee : I tell thee, youth, I am by heaven devoted a dreadful instance of its power to punish. [*Barnwell seems to pray.*] If thou wilt pray, pray for thyself, not me : How doth his fervent soul mount with his words, and both ascend to heaven ! that heaven, whose gates are shut with adamant bars against my prayers, had I the will to pray. I cannot bear it ! Sure 'tis the worst of torments to behold others enjoy that bliss which we must never taste.

' *Officer.* The utmost limit of your time's expired.

' *Mil.* Encompassed with horror, whither must I go ? I would not live——nor die——That I could cease to be——or ne'er had been !

' *Barn.* Since peace and comfort are denied her here, may she find mercy where she least expects it, and this be all her hell. From our example may all be taught, to fly the first approach of vice ; but if o'ertaken,

' By

- ‘ By strong temptation, weakness, or surprize,
- ‘ Lament their guilt, and by repentance rise.
- ‘ Th’ impenitent alone die unforgiven :
- ‘ To sin’s like man, and to forgive like heaven.

‘ *Enter* Trueman.

‘ *Lucy.* Heart-breaking sight ! Oh, wretched, wretched Millwood !

‘ *Tr.* How is she disposed to meet her fate ?

‘ *Blunt,* Who can describe unutterable woe ?

‘ *Lucy.* She goes to death encompassed with horror, loathing life, and yet afraid to die. No tongue can tell her anguish and despair.

‘ *Tr.* Heaven be better to her than her fears. May she prove a warning to others, a monument of mercy in herself.

‘ *Lucy.* Oh, sorrow insupportable ! Break, break, my heart !

Tr. In vain

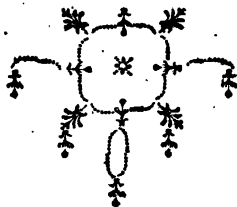
With bleeding hearts, and weeping eyes we show,

A humane, gen’rous sense of others woe ;

Unless we mark what drew their ruin on,

And, by avoiding that——prevent our own.

END of the FIFTH ACT.



E P I L O G U E.

Written by COLLEY CIBBER, Esq.

Spoken by MARIA.

SINCE fate has robb'd me of the hapless youth,
 For whom my heart had boarded up its truth;
 By all the laws of love and honour, now,
 I'm free again to choose——and one of you.

But soft——With caution first I'll round me peep:
 Maids, in my case, should look before they leap.
 Here's choice enough, of various sorts and hue,
 The cit, the wit, the rake cock'd up in cue,
 The fair spruce mercer, and the tawny Jew.

Suppose I search the sober gallery?——No;
 There's none but 'prentices, and cuckolds all-a-row;
 And these, I doubt, are those that make them so.

[Pointing to the boxes.]

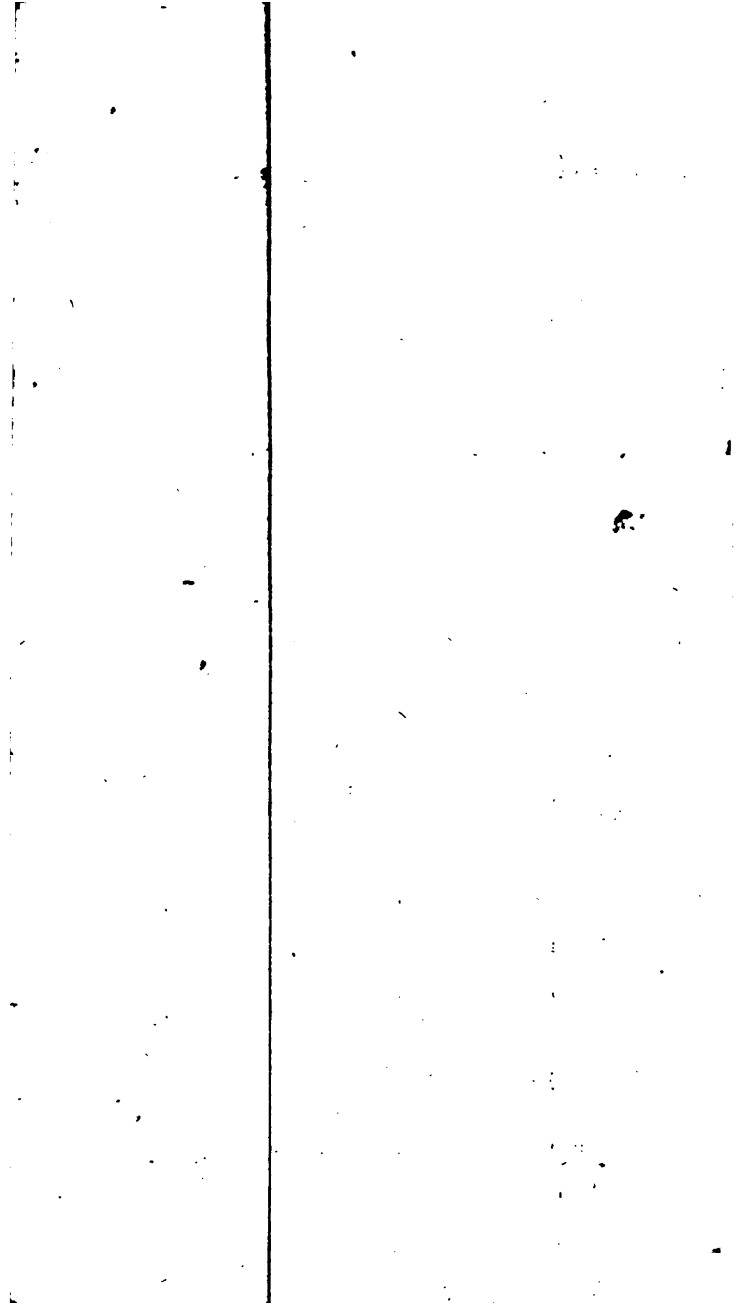
'Tis very well, enjoy the jest:——But you,
 Fine powder'd sparks,——nay, I am told 'tis true,
 Your happy spouses——can make cuckolds too.

'Twixt you and them the diff'rence this perhaps.
 The cit's ashamed whene'er his duck he traps;
 But you, when Madam's tripping, let her fall,
 Cock up your hats, and take no shame at all.

What if some favour'd poet I cou'd meet,
 Whose love wou'd lay his laurels at my feet.
 No——Painted passions real love abhors——
 His flame wou'd prove the suit of creditors.

Not to detain you then with longer pause,
 In short, my heart to this conclusion draws;
 I yield it to the hand that's loudest in applause.







J. Roberts del. 1776.

Thornhill's Sculp.

*M^{rs} Characters of ISABELLA and CHILD.
st. wretched.*

BELL'S EDITION.

I S A B E L L A;

OR, THE
FATAL MARRIAGE.

A TRAGEDY,
Altered from SOUTHERN.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,
By *PERMISSION* of the *MANAGERS*,
By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

Pellex ego facta mariti—

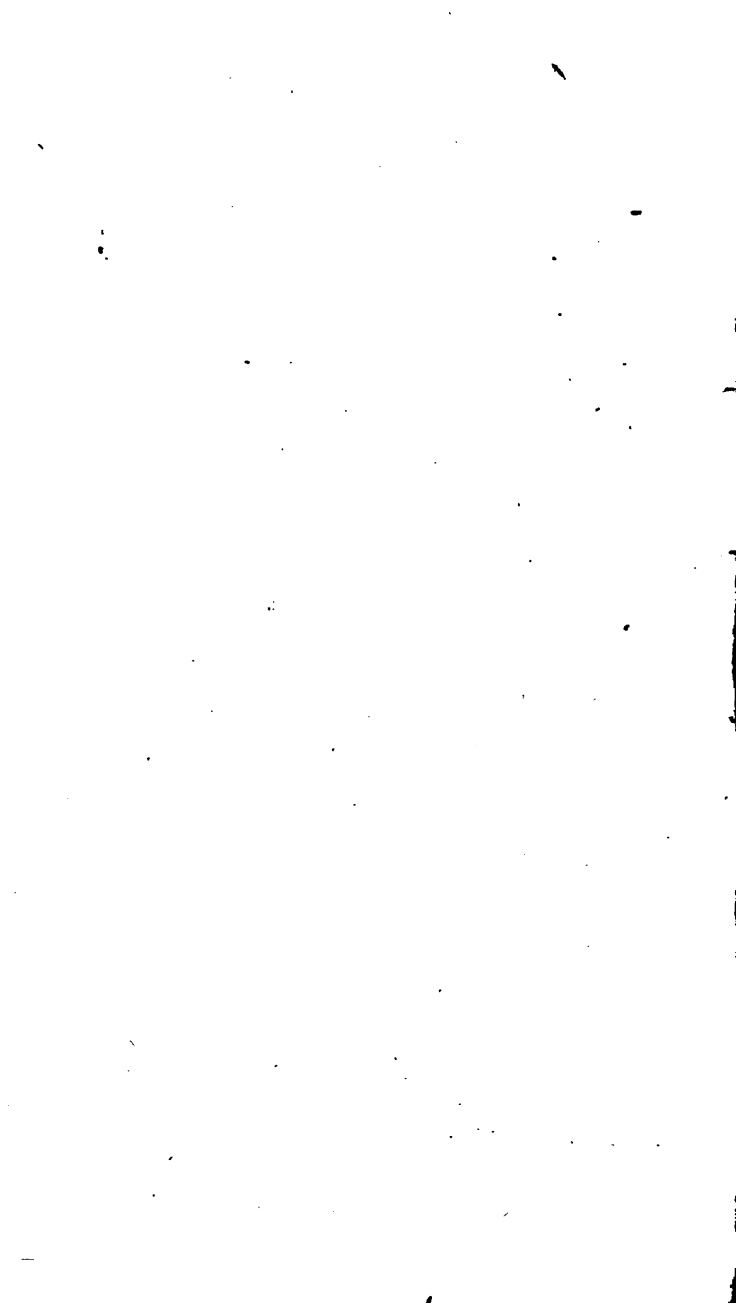
OVID.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exeter-Exchange*, in the *Strand*,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at *York*.

MDCELXXVI.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THOUGH the mixed drama of the last age, called tragi-comedy, has been generally condemned by the critics, and not without reason; yet it has been found to succeed on the stage: both the comic and tragic scenes have been applauded by the audience, without any particular exceptions: nor has it been observed, that the effect of either was less forcible, than it would have been, if they had not succeeded each other in the entertainment of the same night. The tragic part of this play has been always esteemed extremely natural and interesting; and it would probably, like some others, have produced its full effect, notwithstanding the intervention of the comic scenes that are mixed with it: the editor, therefore, would not have thought of removing them, if they had not been exceptionable in themselves, not only as indelicate, but as immoral; for this reason, he has suffered so much of the characters of the Porter and the Nurse to remain, as is not liable to this objection. He is, however, to account, not only for what he has taken away, but for what he has added. It will easily be comprehended, that the leaving out something, made it absolutely necessary that something should be supplied; and the public will be the more easily reconciled to this necessity, when they are acquainted that the additions are very inconsiderable, and that the editor has done his utmost to render them of a piece with the rest. Several lines of the original, particularly in the part of Isabella, are printed, though they are omitted in the representation. Many things please in the reading, which may have little or no effect upon the stage. When the passions are violent, and the speeches long, the performers must either spare their powers, or shorten their speeches. Mrs. Cibber* chose the latter; by which she has been able to exert that force and expression which has been so strongly felt, and so sincerely applauded.

* On the revival of this play at Drury-Lane theatre, Mrs. Cibber performed the character of Isabella.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Count *Baldwin*, father to *Biron* and
Carlos _____

Biron, married to *Isabella*, supposed
dead, _____

Carlos, his younger brother,

Villeroy, in love with *Isabella*, mar-
ries her, _____

Sampson, porter to count *Baldwin*,

A Child of *Isabella's*, by *Biron*,

Bellford, a friend of *Biron's*,

Pedro, a friend to *Carlos*,

Drury-Lane.

Mr. *Jefferson*.

Mr. *Smith*.

Mr. *Aickin*.

Mr. *Palmer*.

Mr. *Bransby*.

Master *Pullen*.

Mr. *Usher*.

Mr. *Wrighten*.

W O M E N.

Isabella, married to *Biron* and *Vil-
leroy*, _____

Nurse to *Biron*, _____

Mrs. *Yates*.

Mrs. *Johnston*.

Officers, Servants, Men and Women.

SCENE, *BRUSSELS*.

I S A B E L L A.

* * * *The lines distinguished by inverted comas are omitted in the Representation, and those printed in Italics are the additions of the Theatre.*

A C T I.

SCENE, *before Count Baldwin's House.*

Enter Villeroy and Carlos.

CARLOS.

THIS constancy of yours will establish an immortal reputation among the women.

Vil. If it would establish me with Isabella——

Car. Follow her, follow her: Troy town was won at last.

Vil. I have follow'd her these seven years, and now but live in hopes.

Car. But live in hopes! Why, hope is the ready road, the lover's baiting-place; and for ought you know, but one stage short of the possession of your mistress.

Vil. But my hopes, I fear, are more of my own making, than hers; and proceed rather from my wishes, than any encouragement she has given me.

Car. That I can't tell: the sex is very various: there are no certain measures to be prescrib'd or follow'd, in making our approaches to the women. All that we have to do, I think, is to attempt 'em in the weakest part. Press them but hard, and they will all fall under the necessity of a surrender at last. That favour comes at once; and sometimes when we least expect it.

Vil. I shall be glad to find it so.

Car. You will find it so. Every place is to be taken, that is not to be reliev'd: she must comply.

Vil. I'm going to visit her.

Car. What interest a brother-in-law can have with her, depend upon.

Vil. I know your interest, and I thank you.

Car. You are prevented; see, the mourner comes;
She weeps, as seven years were seven hours;

So fresh, unfading, is the memory
Of my poor brother's, Biron's, death:

I leave you to your opportunity. [Exit Vile]

Tho' I have taken care to root her from our house.
I would transplant her into Villeroy's——

There is an evil fate that waits upon her,
To which, I wish him wedded—Only him:

His upstart family, with haughty brow,

(Tho' Villeroy and myself are seeming friends,

Looks down upon our house; his sister too,

Whose hand I ask'd, and was with scorn refus'd,

Lives in my breast, and fires me to revenge.——

They bend this way——

Perhaps, at last, she seeks my father's doors;

They shall be shut, and he prepar'd to give

The beggar and her brat a cold reception.

That boy's an adder in my path—they come,

I'll stand a-part, and watch their motions. [Retires.]

Enter Villeroy, with Isabella and her little Son.

Isa. Why do you follow me, you know I am

A bankrupt every way; too far engag'd

Ever to make return; I own you've been

More than a brother to me, my friend;

And at a time when friends are found no more,

A friend to my misfortunes.

Vil. I must be

Always your friend.

Isa. I have known, and found you

Truly my friend; and would I could be yours;

But the unfortunate cannot be friends:

'Fate watches the first motion of the soul,

'To disappoint our wishes; if we pray

'For blessings, they prove curses in the end,

'To ruin all about us.' Pray begone,

Take warning, and be happy.

Vil. Happiness!

There's none for me without you : ' Riches, name,
 ' Health, fame, distinction, place, and quality,
 ' Are the incumbrances of groaning life,
 ' To make it but more tedious without you.'

What serve the goods of fortune for ? To raise
 My hopes, that you at last will share them with me.

' Long life itself, the universal prayer,
 ' And heav'n's reward of well-deservers here,
 ' Would prove a plague to me ; to see you always,
 ' And never see you mine ! still to desire,
 ' And never to enjoy !'

Isa. I must not hear you.

Vil. Thus, at this awful distance, I have serv'd
 A seven years bondage——Do I call it bondage,
 When I can never wish to be redeem'd ?
 No, let me rather linger out a life
 Of expectation, that you may be mine,
 Than be restor'd to the indifference
 Of seeing you, without this pleasing pain :
 I've lost myself, and never would be found,
 But in these arms.

Isa. Oh, I have heard all this !

——But must no more——the charmer is no more :
 My bury'd husband rises in the face
 Of my dear boy, and chides me for my stay :
 Canst thou forgive me, child ?

Child. Why, have you done a fault ? You cry as if
 you had. Indeed now, I've done nothing to offend
 you : but if you kiss me, and look so very sad upon me,
 I shall cry too.

Isa. My little angel, no, you must not cry ;
 Sorrow will overtake thy steps too soon :
 I should not hasten it.

Vil. What can I say !

The arguments that make against my hopes
 Prevail upon my heart, and fix me more ;
 ' Those pious tears you hourly throw away
 ' Upon the grave, have all their quick'ning charms,
 ' And more engage my love, to make you mine :'
 When yet a virgin, free, and undispos'd,
 I lov'd, but saw you only with my eyes ;
 I could not reach the beauties of your soul :

I have

I have since liv'd in contemplation,
 And long experience of your growing goodness :
 What then was passion, is my judgment now,
 Thro' all the several changes of your life,
 Confirm'd and settled in adoring you.

Isa. Nay, then I must be gone. If you're my friend,
 If you regard my little interest ;
 No more of this ; you see, I grant you all
 That friendship will allow : Be still my friend ;
 That's all I can receive, or have to give.
 I'm going to my father ; he needs not an excuse
 To use me ill ; pray leave me to the trial.

Vil. I'm only born to be what you would have me,
 The creature of your power, and must obey ;
 In every thing obey you. I am going :
 But all good fortune go along with you.

Isa. I shall need all your wishes—— [Exit.
[Knocks.

Lock'd ! and fast !
 Where is the charity that us'd to stand
 In our forefathers' hospitable days
 At great men's doors, ready for our wants,
 Like the good angel of the family,
 With open arms taking the needy in,
 To feed and cloath, to comfort and relieve 'em ?
 Now even their gates are shut against their poor.

[She knocks again.

Enter Sampson to her.

Samp. Well, what's to do now, I trow ? You knock
 as loud as if you were invited ; and that's more than I
 heard of : but I can tell you, you may look twice about
 you for a welcome, in a great man's family, before you
 find it, unless you bring it along with you.

Isa. I hope I bring my welcome along with me : Is
 your lord at home ?

Samp. My lord at home !

Isa. Count Baldwin lives here still ?

Samp. Ay, ay, Count Baldwin does live here : and I
 am his porter : but what's that to the purpose, good
 woman, of my lord's being at home ?

Isa. Why, don't you know me, friend ?

Samp. Not I, not I, mistress ; I may have seen you
 before, or so : but men of employment must forget their
 acquaintance ;

acquaintance; especially such as we are never to be the better for.

[*Going to shut the door, Nurse enters, having overheard him.*]

Nurse. Handsomer words would become you, and mend your manners, Sampson: do you know who you prate to?

Isa. I'm glad you know me, nurse.

Nurse. Marry, heav'n forbid, Madam, that I should ever forget you, or my little jewel: pray go in—[*Isabella goes in with her child.*] Now my blessing go along with you, wherever you go, or whatever you are about. Fie, Sampson, how couldst thou be such a Saracen? A Turk would have been a better Christian, than to have done so barbarously by so good a lady.

Samp. Why look you, nurse, I know you of old: by your good-will you would have a finger in every body's pie, but mark the end on't; if I am call'd to account about it, I know what I have to say.

Nurse. Marry come up here; say your pleasure, and spare not. Refuse his eldest son's widow, and poor child, the comfort of seeing him? She does not trouble him so often.

Samp. Not that I am against it, nurse, but we are but servants, you know: we must have no likings, but our lord's; and must do as we are ordered.

Nurse. Nay, that's true, Sampson.

Samp. Besides, what I did was all for the best: I have no ill-will to the young lady, as a body may say, upon my own account; only that I hear she is poor; and indeed I naturally hate your decay'd gentry: they expect as much waiting upon as when they had money in their pockets, and were able to consider us for the trouble.

Nurse. Why, that is a grievance indeed in great families, where the gifts, at good times, are better than the wages. It would do well to be reform'd.

Samp. But what is the business, nurse? You have been in the family before I came into the world: what's the reason, pray, that this daughter-in-law, who has so good a report in every body's mouth, is so little set by, by my lord?

Nurse. Why, I tell you, Sampson, more nor less;

I'll tell the truth, that's my way, you know, without adding or diminishing.

Samp. Ay, marry, nurse.

Nurse. My lord's eldest son, Biron by name, the son of 'his bosom, and the son that he would have lov'd best, if he had as many as king Pyramus of Troy.

'*Samp.* How! King Pyramus of Troy! Why how many had he?'

'*Nurse.* Why, the ballet sings he had fifty sons, but 'no matter for that.' This Biron, as I was saying, was a lovely sweet gentleman, and indeed, nobody could blame his father for loving him: he was a son for the king of Spain; God bless him, for I was his nurse. But now I come to the point, Sampson; this Biron, without asking the advice of his friends, hand over head, as young men will have their vagaries, not having the fear of his father before his eyes, as I may say, wilfully marries this Isabella.

Samp. How, wilfully! he should have had her consent, methinks.

Nurse. No, wilfully marries her; and, which was worse, after she had settled all her fortune upon a nunnery, which she broke out of to run away with him. They say they had the church's forgiveness, but I had rather it had been his father's.

Samp. Why in good truth, 'these nunneries, I see 'no good they do. I think the young lady was in the 'right, to run away from a nunnery:' and I think our young master was not in the wrong but in marrying without a portion.

Nurse. That was the quarrel, I believe, Sampson: upon this, my old lord would never see him; disinherited him; took his younger brother, Carlos, into favour, whom he never car'd for before; and at last forc'd Biron to go to the siege of Candy, where he was killed.

Samp. Alack-a-day, poor gentleman.

Nurse. For which my old lord hates her, as if she had been the cause of his going thither.

Samp. Alas, alas, poor lady! she has suffer'd for't: she has liv'd a great while a widow.

Nurse. A great while indeed, for a young woman, Sampson.

Samp.

Samp. Gad so! here they come; I won't venture to be seen.

Enter Count Baldwin, followed by Isabella and her Child.

C. Bald. Whoever of your friends directed you, Misguided, and abus'd you—There's your way; I can afford to shew you out again; What could you expect from me?

Isa. Oh, I have nothing to expect on earth! But misery is very apt to talk: I thought I might be heard.

C. Bald. What can you say? Is there in eloquence, can there be in words A recompensing pow'r, a remedy, A reparation of the injuries, The great calamities, that you have brought On me, and mine? You have destroy'd those hopes I fondly rais'd, through my declining life, To rest my age upon? and most undone me.

Isa. I have undone myself too.

C. Bald. Speak it again; Say still you are undone, and I will hear you, With pleasure hear you.

Isa. Would my ruin please you?

C. Bald. Beyond all other pleasures.

Isa. Then you are pleas'd—for I am most undone.

C. Bald. I pray'd but for revenge, and heav'n has heard,

And sent it to my wishes: these grey hairs Would have gone down in sorrow to the grave, Which you have dug for me without the thought, The thought of leaving you more wretched here.

Isa. Indeed I am most wretched—' When I lost
' My husband——

' *C. Bald.* Would he had never been;
' Or never had been yours.

' *Isa.* I then believ'd
' The measure of my sorrow then was full:
' But every moment of my growing days
' Makes room for woes, and adds 'em to the sum.'
I lost with Biron all the joys of life:
But now its last supporting means are gone,
All the kind helps that heav'n in pity rais'd,
In charitable pity to our wants,

At last have left us : now bereft of all,
 But this last trial of a cruel father,
 To save us both from sinking. Oh, my child !
 Kneel with me, knock at nature in his heart :
 Let the resemblance of a once-lov'd son
 Speak in this little one, who never wrong'd you,
 And plead the fatherless and widow's cause.
 Oh, if you ever hope to be forgiven,
 As you will need to be forgiven too,
 Forget our faults, that heaven may pardon yours.

C. Bald. How dare you mention heav'n ! Call to mind
 Your perjur'd vows ; your plighted, broken faith
 To heav'n, and all things holy : were you not
 Devoted, wedded to a life recluse,
 The sacred habit on, profess'd and sworn
 A votary for ever ? Can you think
 The sacrilegious wretch, that robs the shrine,
 Is thunder-proof ?

Isa. There, there, began my woes.
 ' Let women all take warning at my fate ;
 ' Never resolve, or think they can be safe,
 ' Within the reach and tongue of tempting men.'
 Oh ! had I never seen my Biron's face,
 Had he not tempted me, I had not fall'n,
 But still continued innocent, and free
 Of a bad world, which only he had pow'r
 To reconcile, and make me try again. [thoughts,

C. Bald. Your own inconstancy, ' your graceless
 ' Debauch'd and' reconcil'd you to the world :
 He had no hand to bring you back again,
 But what you gave him. Circe, you prevail'd
 Upon his honest mind, transforming him
 From virtue, and himself, into what shapes
 You had occasion for ; and what he did
 Was first inspir'd by you. ' A cloyster was
 ' Too narrow for the work you had in hand :
 ' Your business was more general ; the whole world
 ' To be the scene : therefore you spread your charms
 ' To catch his soul, to be the instrument,
 ' The wicked instrument of your cursed flight.
 ' Not that you valued him ; for any one,
 ' Who could have serv'd that turn, had been as welcome.'

Isa. Oh ! I have sins to heav'n, but none to him.

C. Bald.

C. Bald. Had my wretched son
Marry'd a beggar's bastard; taken her
Out of her rags, and made her of my blood,
The mischief might have ceas'd, and ended there.
But bringing you into a family,
Entails a curse upon the name, and house,
That takes you in: the only part of me
That did receive you, perish'd for his crime.

'Tis a defiance to offended heav'n,
Barely to pity you: Your sins pursue you:
' The heaviest judgments that can fall upon you,
' Are your just lot, and but prepare your doom:
' Expect 'em, and despair——Sirrah, rogue,
' How durst thou disobey me!' [To the porter.

Isa. Not for myself——for I am past the hopes
Of being heard——but for this innocent——
And then I never will disturb you more.

C. Bald. I almost pity the unhappy child:
But being yours——

Isa. Look on him as your son's;
And let his part in him answer for mine.
Oh, save, defend him, save him from the wrongs
That fall upon the poor.

C. Bald. It touches me——
And I will save him——But to keep him safe;
Never come near him more.

Isa. What! take him from me!
No, we must never part: 'tis the last hold
Of comfort I have left; and when he fails,
All goes along with him: Oh! 'could you be
' The tyrant to divorce life from my life?'
I live but in my child.

No, let me pray in vain, and beg my bread
From door to door, to feed his daily wants,
Rather than always lose him.

C. Bald. Then have your child, and feed him with your
You, rascal, slave, what do I keep you for? [prayer.
How came this woman in?

Samp. Why indeed, my lord, I did as good as tell
her, before, my thoughts upon the matter——

C. Bald. Did you so, Sir? Now then tell her mine;
Tell her I sent you to her. [Thrusts him towards her.
There's one more to provide for.

Samp. Good, my lord, what I did was in perfect obedience to the old nurse there. I told her what it would come to.

C. Bald. What ! this was a plot upon me. And you too, beldam, were you in the conspiracy ? Begone, go all together ; ' I have provided you an equipage, now ' set up when you please. She's old enough to do you ' service ; I have none for her. The wide world lies ' before you : begone ; ' take any road but this to beg or starve in—' I shall be glad to hear of you : ' but never, never see me more— [*He drives 'em off before him.*

Isa. Then heav'n have mercy on me !

[*Exit with her Child, followed by Sampson and Nurse.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

S C E N E *continues.*

Enter Villeroy, and Carlos, meeting.

VILLEROY.

MY friend, I fear to ask—— but Isabella——
The lovely widow's tears, her orphan's cries,
Thy father must feel for them——No, I read,
I read their cold reception in thine eyes——
Thou pitiest them——tho' Baldwin——but I spare him
For Carlos' sake ; thou art no son of his.
There needs not this to endear thee more to me. [*Embrace.*

Car. My Villeroy, the fatherless, the widow,
Are terms not understood within these gates——
You must forgive him ; Sir, he thinks this woman
Is Biron's fate, that hurried him to death——
I must not think on't, lest my friendship stagger.
My friend's, my sister's, mutual advantage
Have reconcil'd my bosom to its task.

Vil. Advantage ! think not I intend to raise
An interest from Isabella's wrongs.
Your father may have interested ends
In her undoing ; but my heart has none ;
Her happiness must be my interest,
And that I would restore.

Car. Why so I mean.

These hardships that my father lays upon her,
I'm sorry for ; and wish I could prevent :

But

But he will have his way.

Since there's no hope from her prosperity, her change of fortune may alter the condition of her thoughts, and make for you.

Vil. She is above her fortune.

Car. Try her again. Women commonly love according to the circumstances they are in.

Vil. Common women may.

Car. Since you are not accessary to the injustice, you may be persuaded to take the advantage of other people's crimes.

Vil. I must despise all those advantages, That indirectly can advance my love.

No, though I live but in the hopes of her,
And languish for th' enjoyment of those hopes ;
I'd rather pine in a consuming want
Of what I wish, than have the blessing mine,
From any reason but consenting love.
Oh ! let me never have it to remember,
I could betray her coldly to comply :
When a clear gen'rous choice bestows her on me,
I know to value the unequal'd gift :
I would not have it, but to value it.

Car. Take your own way ; remember what I offer'd came from a friend,

Vil. I understand it so. I'll serve her for herself, without the thought of a reward [Exit.

Car. Agree that point between you. If you marry her any way, you do my business.

I know him—What his gen'rous soul intends
Ripens my plots—I'll first to Isabella.—

I must keep up appearances with her too. [Exit.

S C E N E, Isabella's House.

Enter Isabella and Nurse : Isabella's little Son at play upon the Floor.

Isa. Sooner, or later, all things pass away,
And are no more. The beggar and the king,
With equal steps, tread forward to their end :
The reconciling grave swallows distinction first, that made
us foes,

Though they appear of different natures now,
They meet at last ;

'Then all alike lie down in peace together.
 When will that hour of peace arrive for me !
 In heav'n I shall find it—not in heav'n,
 If my old tyrant father can dispose
 Of things above—but, there, his interest
 May be as poor as mine, and want a friend
 As much as I do here. [Weeping.]

Nurse. Good Madam, be comforted.

Isa. Do I deserve to be this out-cast wretch ?
 Abandon'd thus, and lost ? But 'tis my lot,
 'The will of heav'n, and I must not complain :
 I will not for myself : let me bear all
 The violence of your wrath ! but spare my child :
 Let not my sins be visited on him :
 They are ; they must ; a general ruin falls
 On every thing about me : thou art lost,
 Poor nurse, by being near me.

Nurse. I can work, or beg, to do you service.

Isa. Could I forget

What I have been, I might the better bear
 What I am destin'd to : I'm not the first
 That have been wretched : but to think how much
 I have been happier !—Wild hurrying thoughts
 Start every way from my distracted soul,
 To find out hope, and only meet despair.
 What answer have I ?

Enter Sampson.

Samp. Why truly, very little to the purpose : like a
 Jew as he is, he says you have had more already than
 the jewels are worth : he wishes you would rather think
 of redeeming 'em, than expect any more money upon
 'em. [Exit Sampson.]

Isa. 'Tis very well——

So :—Poverty at home, and debts abroad !
 My present fortune bad ; my hopes yet worse !
 What will become of me !
 'This ring is all I have left of value now :
 'Twas given me by my husband : his first gift
 Upon our marriage : I've always kept it,
 With my best care, the treasure next my life :
 And now but part with it to support life,
 Which only can be dearer. Take it, nurse,

'Twill

'Twill stop the cries of hunger for a time ;
 ' Provide us bread, and bring a short reprieve,
 ' To put off the bad day of beggary,
 ' That will come on too soon.' Take care of it :
 Manage it as the last remaining friend
 That would relieve us. [*Exit Nurse.*] Heav'n can only
 tell

Where we shall find another—My dear boy !
 The labour of his birth was lighter to me
 Than of my fondness now ; my fears for him
 Are more, than in that hour of hovering death,
 They could be for myself—He minds me not.
 His little sports have taken up his thoughts :
 Oh, may they never feel the pangs of mine.
 Thinking will make me mad : why must I think,
 When no thought brings me comfort ?

Nurse returns.

Nurse. Oh, Madam ! you are utterly ruin'd and undone ;
 your creditors of all kinds are come in upon you : they
 have muster'd up a regiment of rogues, that are come
 to plunder your house, and seize upon all you have
 in the world ; they are below ? What will you do,
 Madam ?

Isa. Do ! nothing ; no, for I am born to suffer.

Enter Carlos to her.

Car. Oh, sister ! can I call you by that name,
 And be the son of this inhuman man,
 Inveterate to your ruin ? Do not think
 I am a-kin to his barbarity :
 I must abhor my father's usage of you :
 And from my bleeding honest heart, must pity,
 Pity your lost condition. Can you think
 Of any way that I may serve you in ?
 But what enrages most my sense of grief,
 My sorrow for your wrongs, is, that my father,
 Fore-knowing well the storm that was to fall,
 Has order'd me not to appear for you.

Isa. I thank your pity ; my poor husband fell
 For disobeying him, do not you stay
 To venture his displeasure too for me.

Car. You must resolve on something—

[*E. wt.*

Isa. Let my fate

Determine for me ; I shall be prepar'd,
 The worst that can befall me, is to die : *[A noise.*
 ' When once it comes to that, it matters not
 ' Which way 'tis brought about : whether I starve,
 ' Or hang, or drown, the end is still the same ;
 ' Plagues, poison, famine, are but several names
 ' Of the same thing, and all conclude in death.
 ' ———But sudden death ! Oh, for a sudden death,
 ' To cheat my persecutors of their hopes,
 ' Th' expected pleasure of beholding me
 ' Long in my pains, ling'ring in misery.
 ' It will not be, that is deny'd me too.'
 Hark, they are coming ; let the torrent roar :
 It can but overwhelm me in its fall ;
 And life and death are now alike to me.

[Exeunt, the Nurse leading the child.]

SCENE opens, and shews Carlos and Villeroy
 with the Officers.

Vil. No farther violence——

The debt in all is but four thousand crowns :
 Were it ten times the sum, I think you know
 My fortune very well can answer it.
 You have my word for this : I'll see you paid.

Off. That's as much as we can desire : so we have the
 Money, no matter whence it comes.

Vil. To-morrow you shall have it.

Car. Thus far all's well——

Enter Isabella, and Nurse with the Child.

And now my sister comes to crown the work. *[Aside.*

Isa. Where are the raving blood-hounds, that pursue
 In a full cry, gaping to swallow me ?
 I meet your rage, and come to be devour'd :
 Say, which way are you to dispose of me !
 To dungeons, darkness, death !

Car. Have patience.

Isa. Patience !

Off. You'll excuse us, we are but in our office :
 Debts must be paid.

Isa. My death will pay you all. *[Distressedly.]*

Off. While there is law to be had, people will have
 their own.

Vil.

Vil. 'Tis very fit they should; but pray be gone.
To-morrow certainly——— [Exeunt officers.]

Isa. What of to-morrow?
'Am I then the sport,
'The game of fortune, and her laughing fools?
'The common spectacle, to be expos'd
'From day to day, and baited for the mirth
'Of the lewd rabble?' Must I be reserv'd
For fresh afflictions?

Vil. For long happiness
Of life, I hope.

Isa. There is no hope for me.
The load grows light, when we resolve to bear:
I'm ready for my trial.

Car. Pray be calm,
And know your friends.

Isa. My friends! Have I a friend?

Car. A faithful friend; in your extremest need,
Villeroy came in to save you——

Isa. Save me! How?

Car. By satisfying all your creditors.

Isa. Which way? For what?

Vil. Let me be understood,
And then condemn me; you have given me leave
To be your friend; and in that only name,
I now appear before you, I could wish
There had been no occasion of a friend,
Because I know you hate to be oblig'd;
And still more loth to be oblig'd by me.

Isa. 'Twas that I would avoid———

[Aside.]

Vil. I'm most unhappy, that my services
Can be suspected to design upon you;
I have no farther ends than to redeem you
From fortune's wrongs; to shew myself at last,
What I have long profess'd to be, your friend:
Allow me that; and to convince you more,
That I intend only your interest,
Forgive what I have done, and in amends
(If that can make you any, that can please you)
I'll tear myself for ever from my hopes,
Stifle this flaming passion in my soul,
'That has so long broke out to trouble you,'
And mention my unlucky love no more.

Isa.

Isa. This generosity will ruin me.

[*Aside.*

Vil. Nay, if the blessing of my looking on you
Disturbs your peace, I will do all I can
To keep away, and never see you more.

Car. You must not go.

Vil. Could Isabella speak

Those few short words, I should be rooted here,
And never move but upon her commands.

Car. Speak to him, sister; do not throw away
A fortune that invites you to be happy.

In your extremity he begs your love;

And has deserv'd it nobly: Think upon

Your lost condition, helpless and alone.

Tho' now you have a friend, the time must come

That you will want one; him you may secure

To be a friend, a father, a husband to you.

Isa. A husband!

Car. You have discharg'd your duty to the dead,

And to the living; 'tis a wilfulness

Not to give way to your necessities,

That force you to this marriage.

Nur. What must become of this poor innocence?

[*To the child.*

Car. He wants a father to protect his youth,

And rear him up to virtue: You must bear

The future blame, and answer to the world,

When you refuse the easy honest means

Of taking care of him.

' *Nur.* Of him and me,

' And every one that must depend upon you;

' Unless you please now to provide for us,

' We must all perish.'

Car. Nor would I press you——

Isa. Do not think I need

Your reasons, to confirm my gratitude;

I have a soul that's truly sensible

Of your great worth, and busy to contrive, [*To Vil.*

If possible, to make you a return.

Vil. Oh, easily possible!

Isa. It cannot be your way: my pleasures are

Bury'd, and cold in my dead husband's grave;

And I should wrong the truth, myself, and you,

To say that I can ever love again.
 I owe this declaration to myself :
 But as a proof that I owe all to you,
 If after what I've said, you can resolve
 To think me worth your love—Where am I going?
 You cannot think it ; 'tis impossible.

Vil. Impossible !

Isa. You should not ask me now, nor should I grant ;
 I am so much oblig'd, that to consent
 Wou'd want a name to recommend the gift :
 'Twou'd shew me poor, indebted, and compell'd,
 Designing, mercenary ; and I know
 You would not wish to think I could be bought.

Vil. Be bought ! Where is the price that can pretend
 To bargain for you ? Not in fortune's power.
 The joys of Heav'n, and love, must be bestow'd :
 They are not to be sold, and cannot be deserv'd.

Isa. Some other time I'll hear you on this subject.

Vil. Nay, then there is no time so fit for me.

[*Following her.*]

Since you consent to hear me, hear me now ;
 That you may grant : you are above
 The little forms which circumscribe your sex ;
 We differ but in time, let that be mine.

Isa. You think fit

To get the better of me, and you shall ;
 Since you will have it so—I will be yours.

Vil. I take you at your word.

Isa. I give you all

My hand ; and would I had a heart to give :
 But if it ever can return again,
 'Tis wholly yours.

Vil. Oh, ecstacy of joy !

Leave that to me. If all my services,
 ' If prosperous days, and kind indulging nights ;'
 If all that man can fondly say or do,
 Can beget love, love shall be born again,
 Oh, Carlos ! now my friend, and brother too :
 And, nurse, I have eternal thanks for thee,
 Send for the priest—
 This night you must be mine.

[*Nurse goes out in haste.*]

Let

Let me command in this, and all my life
Shall be devoted to you.

Isa. On your word,
Never to press me to put off these weeds,
Which best become my melancholy thoughts,
You shall command me.

Vil. Witness Heaven and earth
Against my soul, when I do any thing
To give you a disquiet.

Car. I long to wish you joy.

Vil. You'll be a witness of my happiness?

Car. For once I'll be my sister's father,
And give her to you.

Vil. Next, my Isabella,
Be near my heart: I am for ever yours.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *Count Baldwin's house.*

Enter Count Baldwin and Carlos.

COUNT BALDWIN.

MARRIED to Villeroy, say'st thou?

Car. Yes, my lord.
Last night the priest perform'd his holy office,
And made 'em one.

C. Bald. Misfortune join 'em!
And may her violated vows pull down
A lasting curse, a constancy of sorrow
On both their heads—' I have not yet forgot
' Thy slighted passion, the refus'd alliance;
' But having her, we are reveng'd at full.
' Heav'n will pursue her still, and Villeroy
' Share the judgments she calls down.'

Car. Soon he'll hate her;
Tho' warm and violent in his raptures now;
When full enjoyment palls his sicken'd sense,
And reason with satiety returns,
Her cold constrain'd acceptance of his hand

Wm

Will gall his pride, which (tho' of late o'erpower'd
By stronger passions) will, as they grow weak,
Rise in full force, and pour its vengeance on her.

C. Bald. Now, Carlos, take example to thy aid;
Let Biron's disobedience, and the curse
He took into his bosom, prove a warning,
A monitor to thee, to keep thy duty
Firm and unshaken.

Car. May those rankling wounds
Which Biron's disobedience gave my father,
Be heal'd by me.

C. Bald. With tears I thank thee, Carlos—
And may'st thou ever feel those inward joys,
Thy duty gives thy father—but, my son,
We must not let resentment choak our justice;
'Tis fit that Villeroy know he has no claim
From me, in right of Isabella——Biron,
(Whose name brings tears) when wedded to this woman,
By me abandon'd, sunk the little fortune
His uncle left, in vanity and fondness:
I am possess'd of those your brother's papers,
Which now are Villeroy's, and shou'd ought remain,
In justice it is his; from me to him
You shall convey them——follow me, and take 'em.

[*Exit C. Baldwin.*]

Car. Yes, I will take 'em; but e'er I part with 'em,
I will be sure my interest will not suffer
By these his high, refin'd, fantastic notions
Of equity and right—What a paradox
Is man! My father here, who boasts his honour,
And ev'n but now was warm in praise of justice,
Can steel his heart against the widow's tears,
And infant's wants; the widow and the infant
Of Biron; of his son, his fav'rite son.
'Tis ever thus weak minds, who court opinion,
And, dead to virtuous feeling, hide their wants
In pompous affectation—Now to Villeroy—
E'er this his friends, for he is much lov'd,
Croud to his house, and with their nuptial songs
Awake the wedded pair: I'll join the throng,
And in my face, at least, bear joy and friendship. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, *a hall in Villeroy's house. A band of music, with the friends of Villeroy.*

Enter a Servant.

1st Fr. Where's your master, my good friend?

Ser. Within, Sir,

Preparing for the welcome of his friends.

1st Fr. Acquaint him we are here : yet stay,
The voice of music gently shall surprise him,
And breathe our salutations to his ear.
Strike up the strain to Villeroy's happiness,
To Isabella's——But he's here already.

Enter Villeroy.

Vil. My friends, let me embrace you :
Welcome all——

What means this preparation ? *[Seeing the Music.]*

1st Fr. A slight token

Of our best wishes for your growing happiness——
You must permit our friendship——

Vil. You oblige me——

1st Fr. But your lovely bride,
That wonder of her sex, she must appear.
And add new brightness to this happy morning.

Vil. She is not yet prepar'd ; and let her will,
My worthiest friend, determine her behaviour ;
To win, and not to force her disposition,
Has been my seven years task. She will anon,
Speak welcome to you all. The music stays.

[Villeroy and his friends seat themselves.]

E P I T H A L A M I U M.

A I R.

Woman. Let all, let all be gay,
Begin the rapt'rous lay ;
Let mirth, let mirth and joy,
Each happy hour employ,
Of this fair bridal day.

Man. Ye love-wing'd hours, your flight,
Your downy flight prepare,
Bring ev'ry soft delight
To sooth the brave and fair.
Hail happy pair, thus in each other blest ;
Be ever free from care, of ev'ry joy possest.

Vil.

Vil. I thank you for this proof of your affection:
 I am so much transported with the thoughts
 Of what I am, I know not what I do.
 My Isabella!—but possessing her,
 Who wou'd not lose himself?—You'll pardon me—
 Oh! there was nothing wanting to my soul,
 But the kind wishes of my loving friends—
 'But our collation waits;' where's Carlos now?
 Methinks I am but half myself, without him.

2d Fr. This is wonderful! Married a night and a day,
 and yet in raptures.

Vil. Oh! when you all get wives, and such as mine,
 (If such another woman can be found)
 You will rave too, doat on the dear content,
 And prattle in their praise out of all bounds.
 'I cannot speak my bliss!' 'Tis in my head.
 'Tis in my heart, and takes up all my soul—
 'The labour of my fancy. You'll pardon me;
 'About some twelve months hence I may begin
 'To speak plain sense—Walk in, and honour me.'

Enter Isabella.

My Isabella! Oh, the joy of my heart,
 That I have leave at last to call you mine!
 'When I give up that title to the charms
 'Of any other wish, be nothing mine.'
 But let me look upon you, view you well.
 This is a welcome gallantry indeed!
 I durst not ask, but it was kind to grant,
 Just at this time: dispensing with your dress
 Upon this second day to greet our friends.

Isa. Black might be ominous;
 I would not bring ill luck along with me.

Vil. Oh! if your melancholy thoughts could change
 With shifting of your dress—Time has done cures
 Incredible this way, and may again.

Isa. I could have wish'd, if you had thought it fit,
 Our marriage had not been so public.

Vil. Do not you grudge me my excess of love;
 'That was a cause it could not be conceal'd':
 Besides, 'twould injure the opinion
 I have of my good fortune, having you;
 And lessen it in other people's thoughts,

- * Busy on such occasions to enquire,
 * Had it been private.'

Isa. I have no more to say.

Enter Carlos.

Vil. My Carlos too, who came in to the support
 Of our bad fortune, has an honest right,
 In better times, to share the good with us.

Car. I come to claim that right, to share your joy ;
 To wish you joy ; and find it in myself ;

- * For a friend's happiness reflects a warmth,
 * A kindly comfort, into every heart
 * That is not envious.

Vil. ' He must be a friend,
 * Who is not envious of a happiness
 * So absolute as mine ; but if you are,
 * (As I have reason to believe you are)
 * Concern'd for my well-being, there's the cause ;
 * Thank her for what I am, and what must be.'

[*Music flourish.*]

I see you mean a second entertainment.
 My dearest Isabella, you must hear
 The rapture of my friends ; from thee they spring ;
 Thy virtues have diffus'd themselves around,
 And made them all as happy as myself.

Isa. I feel their favours with a grateful heart,
 And willingly comply.

RECITATIVE.

Take the gifts the gods intend ye ;
 Grateful meet the proffer'd joy ;
 Truth and honour shall attend ye ;
 Charms that ne'er can change or cloy.

DUETTO.

Man. Oh, the raptures of possessing,
 Taking beauty to thy arms !

Woman. Oh the joy, the lasting blessing,
 When with virtue beauty charms !

Man. Purer flames shall gently warm ye ;

Woman. Love and honour both shall charm thee.

Both. Oh the raptures of, &c. &c.

CHORUS.

CHORUS.

Far from hence be care and strife,
 Far, the pang that tortures life :
 May the circling minutes prove
 One sweet round of peace and love !

Cor. 'Tis fine, indeed !

You'll take my advice another time, sister.

Vil. What have you done ? A rising smile
 Stole from her thoughts, just red'ning on her cheek,
 And you have dash'd it.

Cor. I am sorry for't.

Vil. My friends, will you forgive me, when I own,
 I must prefer her peace to all the world ?
 Come, Isabella, let us lead the way :
 Within we'll speak our welcome to our friends,
 And crown the happy festival with joy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, a Room.

Enter Sampson and Nurse.

Samp. Ay, marry nurse, here's a master indeed ! He'll double our wages for us ! If he comes on as fast with my lady, as he does with his servants, we are all in the way to be well pleased.

Nurse. He's in a rare humour ; if she be in as good a one——

Samp. If she be, marry, we may e'en say, they have begot it upon one another.

Nurse. Well ; why don't you go back again to your old count ? You thought your throat cut, I warrant you, to be turn'd out of a nobleman's service.

Samp. For the future, I will never serve in a house, where the master or mistress of it lie single : they are out of humour with every body when they are not pleased themselves. Now, this matrimony makes every thing go well. There's mirth and money stirring about, when those matters go as they should do.

Nurse. Indeed, this matrimony, Sampson ——

Samp. Ah, nurse ! this matrimony is a very good thing——but, what, now my lady is married, I hope we shall have company come to the house : there's something always coming from one gentleman or other upon those

those occasions, if my lady loves company. This feasting looks well, nurse.

Nurse. Odso, my master! we must not be seen. [*Exit.*

Enter Villeroy with a letter, and Isabella.

Vil. I must away this moment—see his letter, Sign'd by himself: alas! he could no more; My brother's desperate, and cannot die In peace, but in my arms.

Isa. So suddenly!

Vil. Suddenly taken, on the road to Brussels, To do us honour, love; unfortunate! Thus to be torn from thee, and all those charms, Tho' cold to me and dead.

Isa. I'm sorry for the cause.

Vil. Oh! could I think, Could I persuade myself that your concern For me, or for my absence, were the spring, The fountain of these melancholy thoughts, My heart would dance, spite of the sad occasion, And be a gay companion in my journey; But——

Enter Carlos from supper.

My good Carlos, why have you left my friends?

Car. They are departed home.

They saw some sudden melancholy news Had stolen the lively colour from your cheek—— You had withdrawn, the bride, alarm'd, had follow'd: Mere ceremony had been constraint; and this Good-natur'd rudeness——

Vil. Was the more obliging.

There, Carlos, is the cause.

[*Gives the letter.*

Car. Unlucky accident!

Th' archbishop of Malines, your worthy brother, With him to-night! Sister, will you permit it?

Vil. It must be so.

Isa. You hear it must be so.

Vil. Oh, that it must!

Car. To leave your bride so soon!

Vil. But having the possession of my love, I am the better able to support My absence, in the hopes of my return.

Car. Your stay will be but short?

Vil.

Vil. It will seem long !

The longer that my Isabella sighs :

I shall be jealous of this rival, grief,

‘ That you indulge and fondle in my absence.’

It takes so full possession of thy heart,

There is not room enough for mighty love.

Enter Servant, and bows.

My horses wait : farewell, my love ! You, Carlos,

Will act a brother’s part, ’till I return,

And be the guardian here. All, all I have

That’s dear to me, I give up to your care.

Car. And I receive her as a friend and brother.

Vil. Nay, stir not, love ; for the night air is cold,

And the dews fall—Here be our end of parting ;

Carlos will see me to my horse. [*Exit with Carlos.*

Isa. Oh, may thy brother better all thy hopes ! Adieu.

‘ A sudden melancholy bakes my blood !

‘ Forgive me, Villeroy—I do not find

‘ That chearful gratitude thy service asks :

‘ Yet, if I know my heart, and sure I do,

‘ ’Tis not averse from honest obligation.

‘ I’ll to my chamber, and to bed ; my mind,

‘ My harrafs’d mind, is weary.’

[*Exit.*

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE, *the street.*

Enter Biron and Belford, just arriv’d.

BIRON.

THE longest day will have an end ; we are got home
at last.

Bel. We have got our legs at liberty ; and liberty is
home, where’er we go ; though mine lies most in Eng-
land.

Bir. Pray let me call this yours : for what I can com-
mand in Brussels, you shall find your own. I have a fa-
ther here, who, perhaps, after seven years absence, and
costing him nothing in my travels, may be glad to see
me

me. You know my story—How does my disguise become me?

Bel. Just as you would have it; 'tis natural, and will conceal you.

Bir. To-morrow you shall be sure to find me here, as early as you please. This is the house, you have observ'd the street.

Bel. I warrant you; I han't many visits to make, before I come to you.

Bir. To-night I have some affairs, that will oblige me to be private.

Bel. A good bed is the privatest affair that I desire to be engaged in to-night; your directions will carry me to my lodgings.

[*Exit.*]

Bir. Good night, my friend.

[*Knocks.*]

The long expected moment is arriv'd!

And if all here is well, my past sorrows

Will only heighten my excess of joy;

And nothing will remain to wish or hope for!

[*Knocks again.*]

Enter Sampson.

Sam. Who's there? What would you have?

Bir. Is your lady at home, friend?

Sam. Why, truly friend, it is my employment to answer impertinent questions: but for my lady's being at home, or no, that's just as my lady pleases.

Bir. But how shall I know, whether it pleases her or no?

Sam. Why, if you'll take my word for it, you may carry your errand back again: she never pleases to see any body at this time of night, that she does not know; and by your dress and appearance, I am sure, you must be a stranger to her.

Bir. But I have business; and you don't know how that may please her.

Sam. Nay, if you have business, she is the best judge whether your business will please her or no: therefore I will proceed in my office, and know of my lady, whether or no she is pleas'd to be at home, or no—

[*Going.*]

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Who's that you are so busy withal? Methinks you might have found out an answer in fewer words: but

I S A B E L L A

87

but, Sampson, you love to hear yourself prate sometimes; as well as your betters, that I must say for you. Let me come to him. Who would you speak with, stranger?

Bir. With you, mistress, if you could help me to speak to your lady.

Nurse. Yes, Sir, I can help you in a civil way; but can nobody do your business but my lady?

Bir. Not so well; but if you carry her this ring, she'll know my business better.

Nurse. There's no love-letter in it, I hope: you look like a civil gentleman. In an honest way, I may bring you an answer. [Exit.]

Bir. My old nurse, only a little older! They say 'the tongue grows always: mercy on me! then her's is 'seven years longer, since I left her.' Yet there's something in these servants' folly pleases me: the cautious conduct of the family appears, and speaks in their impertinence. Well, mistress——

Nurse returns.

Nurse. I have deliver'd your ring, Sir; pray heav'n, you bring no bad news along with you.

Bir. Quite contrary, I hope.

Nurse. Nay, I hope so too; but my lady was very much surpriz'd when I gave it her. Sir, I am but a servant, as a body may say; but if you'll walk in, that I may shut the doors, for we keep very orderly hours; I can show you into the parlour, and help you to an answer, perhaps as soon as those that are wiser. [Exit.]

Bir. I'll follow you——

Now all my spirits hurry to my heart,

And every sense has taken the alarm

At this approaching interview!

Hear'ns! how I tremble!

[Exit into the house.]

SCENE, a chamber.

Enter Isabella.

Isa. I've heard of witches, magic spells, and charms,
That have made nature start from her old course:

The sun has been eclips'd, the moon drawn down,

From her career, still paler, and subdu'd

To the abuses of this under world!

Now I believe all possible. This ring,

This

This little ring, with necromantic force,
Has rais'd the ghost of pleasure to my fears :
Conjur'd the sense of honour, and of love,
Into such shapes, they fright me from myself !
I dare not think of them ———

' I'll call you when I want you.' [*Servant goes out.*

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Madam, the gentleman's below.

Isa. I had forgot, pray let me speak with him.

[*Exit Nurse.*

This ring was the first present of my love
To Biron, my first husband : I must blush
To think I have a second. Biron dy'd
(Still to my loss) at Candy ; there's my hope.
Oh, do I live to hope that he dy'd there !
It must be so : he's dead, and this ring left
By his last breath, to some known faithful friend,
To bring me back again ;

[*Biron introduc'd——Nurse retires.*

That's all I have to trust to——

My fears were woman's——I have view'd him all :
And let me, let me say it to myself,
I live again, and rise but from his tomb.

Bir. Have you forgot me quite ?

Isa. Forgot you !

Bir. Then farewell my disguise, and my misfortunes.
My Isabella !

[*He goes to her ; she shrieks, and falls in a swoon.*

Isa. Ha !

Bir. Oh ! come again :

Thy Biron summons thee to life and love ;

' Once I had charms to wake thee : '

Thy once lov'd, ever-loving husband calls——

Thy Biron speaks to thee.

Isa. My husband ! Biron ?

Bir. Excess of love and joy, for my return,
Has overpower'd her——I was to blame

To take thy sex's softness unprepar'd :

But sinking thus, thus dying in my arms,

This ecstasy has made my welcome more

Than words could say : words may be counterfeit,

False coin'd, and current only from the tongue,

Without

Without the mind ; but passion's in the soul,
And always speaks the heart.

Isa. Where have I been ? Why do you keep him
from me ?

I know his voice : my life upon the wing,
Hears the soft lure that brings me back again :
'Tis he himself, my Biron, the dear man !
My true-lov'd husband ! Do I hold you fast,
Never to part again ? ' Can I believe it ?
' Nothing but you could work so great a change.
' There's more than life itself in dying here.'
If I must fall, death's welcome in these arms.

Bir. Live ever in these arms.

Isa. But pardon me,
Excuse the wild disorder of my soul :
The joy, the strange surprizing joy of seeing you,
Of seeing you again, distracted me——

Bir. Thou everlasting goodness !

Isa. Answer me :
What hand of Providence has brought you back
To your own home again ? O, satisfy
Th' impatience of my heart : I long to know
The story of your sufferings. ' You would think
' Your pleasures sufferings, so long remov'd
' From Isabella's love.' But tell me all,
For every thought confounds me.

Bir. My best life ; at leisure, all.

Isa. We thought you dead ; kill'd at the siege
of Candy.

Bir. There I fell among the dead ;
But hopes of life reviving from my wounds,
I was preserv'd but to be made a slave :
I often writ to my hard father, but never had
An answer, I writ to thee too——

Isa. What a world of woe
Had been prevented, but in hearing from you !

Bir. Alas ! thou couldst not help me.

Isa. You do not know how much I could ha' done ;
At least, I'm sure I could have suffer'd all :
I would have sold myself to slavery,
Without redemption ; giv'n up my child,
The dearest part of me to basest wants——

Bir.

Bir. My little boy!

Isa. My life, but to have heard
You were alive——which now too late I find. [*Aside.*]

Bir. No more, my love, complaining of the past,
We lose the present joy. 'Tis over price
Of all my pains, that thus we meet again——

I have a thousand things to say to thee——

Isa. Wou'd I were past the hearing. [*Aside.*]

Bir. How does my child, my boy, my father too?
I hear he's living still.

Isa. Well both, both well;
And may he prove a father to your hopes,
Though we have found him none.

Bir. Come, no more tears.

Isa. Seven long years of sorrow for your loss,
Have mourn'd with me——

Bir. And all my days behind
Shall be employ'd in a kind recompence
For thy afflictions,—Can't I see my boy?

Isa. He's gone to bed: I'll have him brought to you.

Bir. To-morrow I shall see him; I want rest
myself, after my weary pilgrimage.

Isa. Alas! what shall I get for you?

Bir. Nothing but rest, my love! To night I would not
Be known, if possible, to your family:
I see my Nurse is with you; her welcome
Wou'd be tedious at this time;
To-morrow will do better.

Isa. I'll dispose of her, and order every thing
As you wou'd have it. [*Exit.*]

Bir. Grant me but life, good heav'n, and give the
means,

To make this wond'rous goodness some amends:

And let me then forget her, if I can!

O! she deserves of me much more, than I
Can lose for her, though I again cou'd venture
A father, and his fortune, for her love!

You wretched fathers; blind as fortune all!

Not to perceive that such a woman's worth

Weights down the portions you provide your sons:

What is your trash, what all your heaps of gold,

Compar'd

Compar'd to this, my heart-felt happiness?

[*Bursts into tears.*]

What has she, in my absence, undergone?
I must not think, of that; it drives me back
Upon myself, the fated cause of all.

Isabella returns.

Isa. I have obey'd your pleasure;
Every thing is ready for you.

Bir. I can want nothing here; possessing thee,
All my desires are carry'd to their aim
Of happiness; there's no room for a wish,
But to continue still this blessing to me:
I know the way, my love, 'I shall sleep sound.'

Isa. Shall I attend you.

Bir. By no means;

I've been so long a slave to others' pride,
To learn, at least, to wait upon myself;
You'll make haste after——

[*Goes in.*]

Isa. I'll but say my prayers, and follow you——
My prayers! no, I must never pray again.
Prayers have their blessings to reward our hopes,
But I have nothing left to hope for more.
What heav'n could give, I have enjoy'd; but now
The baneful planet rises on my fate,
And what's to come, is a long line of woe
Yet I may shorten it——

I promis'd him to follow—— him!

Is he without a name? Biron, my husband,
To follow him to bed——my husband! ha!

What then is Villeroy? But yesterday
That very bed receiv'd him for its lord,
'Yet a warm witness of my broken vows.'

Oh, Biron, hadst thou come but one day sooner,
I wou'd have follow'd thee through beggary,
Through all the chances of this weary life:

Wander'd the many ways of wretchedness

With thee, to find a hospitable grave;

For that's the only bed that's left me now.

[*Weeping.*]

——What's to be done—for something must be done.

Two husbands! yet not one! By both enjoy'd,

And yet a wife to neither! Hold my brain——

'This is to live in common! Very beasts,

' That

' That welcome all they meet, make just such wives.
 ' My reputation ! Oh, 'twas all was left me :
 ' The virtuous pride of an uncensur'd life ;
 ' Which, the dividing tongues of Biron's wrongs,
 ' And Villeroy's resentments, tear asunder,
 ' To gorge the throats of the blaspheming rabble.
 ' This is the best of what can come to-morrow,
 ' Besides old Baldwin's triumph in my ruin :
 ' I cannot bear it——
 ' Therefore no morrow : ' Ha ! a lucky thought
 Works the right way to rid me of 'em all ;
 All the reproaches, infamies, and scorns,
 That every tongue and finger will find for me.
 Let the just horror of my apprehensions
 But keep me warm——no matter what can come.
 'Tis but a blow——yet I will see him first——
 Have a last look to heighten my despair,
 And then to rest for ever——

Biron meets her.

Bir. Despair and rest for ever ! Isabella !
 These words are far from thy condition ;
 And be they ever so. I heard thy voice,
 And could not bear thy absence : come, my love !
 You have staid long, there's nothing, nothing sure
 Now to despair of in succeeding fate.

Isa. I am contented to be miserable,
 But not this way : I've been too long abus'd,
 And can believe no more.
 Let me sleep on to be deceiv'd no more.

Bir. Look up, my love, I never did deceive thee,
 Nor ever can ; believe thyself, thy eyes
 That first inflam'd, and lit me to my love,
 Those stars, that still must guide me to my joys.

Isa. And me to my undoing : I look round
 And find no path, but leading to the grave.

Bir. I cannot understand thee.

' *Isa.* My good friends above,
 ' I thank 'em, have at last found out a way
 ' To make my fortune perfect ; having you
 ' I need no more ; my fate is finish'd here.'

' *Bir.* Both our ill-fates, I hope.'

' *Isa.* Hope is a lying, sawning flatterer,

‘ That shews the fair side only of our fortunes,
 ‘ To cheat us easier into our fall ;
 ‘ A trusted friend, who only can betray you ;
 ‘ Never believe him more. — If marriages
 Are made in heav’n, they should be happier :
 Why was I made this wretch ?

Bir. Has marriage made thee wretched ?

Isa. Miserable, beyond the reach of comfort.

Bir. Do I live to hear thee say so ?

Isa. Why ! what did I say ?

Bir. That I have made thee miserable.

Isa. No : you are my only earthly happiness ;
 And my false tongue bely’d my honest heart,
 If it said otherwise.

Bir. And yet you said,
 Your marriage made you miserable.

Isa. I know not what I said :
 I’ve said too much, unless I could speak all.

Bir. Thy words are wild ; my eyes, my ears, my heart,
 Were all so full of thee, so much employ’d
 In wonder of thy charms, I could not find it ;
 Now I perceive it plain——

Isa. You’ll tell no body—— [Distractedly.]

Bir. Thou art not well.

Isa. Indeed I am not ; I knew that before,
 But where’s the remedy ?

Bir. Rest will relieve thy cares : come, come, no more ;
 I’ll banish sorrow from thee.

Isa. Banish first the cause.

Bir. Heav’n knows how willingly.

Isa. You are the only cause.

Bir. Am I the cause ? the cause of thy misfortunes ?

Isa. The fatal innocent cause of all my woes.

Bir. Is this my welcome home ? This the reward
 Of all my miseries, long labours, pains,
 And pining wants of wretched slavery,
 Which I’ve out-liv’d, only in hopes of thee !
 Am I thus paid at last for deathless love ?
 And call’d the cause of thy misfortunes now ?

Isa. Enquire no more ; ’twill be explain’d too soon.

Bir. What ! Can’st thou leave me too ? [She’s going off. He stays her.]

Isa. Pray let me go:
For both our sakes, permit me——

Bir. Rack me not with imaginations
Of things impossible——Thou can'st not mean
What thou hast said—Yet something she must mean.
—'Twas madness all—Compose thyself, my love!
The fit is past ; all may be well again :
Let us to bed.

Isa. To bed ! You've rais'd the storm
Will sever us for ever: Oh, Biron !
' While I have life, still I must call you mine :
' I know I am, and always was, unworthy
' To be the happy partner of your love ;
' And now must never, never share it more.
' But, Oh ! if ever I was dear to you,
' As sometimes you have thought me,' on my knees,
(The last time I shall care to be believ'd)
I beg you, beg to think me innocent,
Clear of all crimes, that thus can banish me
From this world's comforts, in my losing you.

' *Bir.* Where will this end ?'

' *Isa.* The rugged hand of fate has got between
' Our meeting hearts, and thrusts them from their joys :'
Since we must part——

Bir. Nothing shall ever part us.

' *Isa.* Parting's the least that is set down for me :
' Heav'n has decreed, and we must suffer all.'

' *Bir.* I know thee innocent : I know myself so :
' Indeed we both have been unfortunate ;
' But sure misfortunes ne'er were faults in love.'

Isa. Oh ! there's a fatal story to be told ;
Be deaf to that, as heav'n has been to me !
' And rot the tongue that shall reveal my shame :'
When thou shalt hear how much thou hast been wrong'd,
How wilt thou curse thy fond believing heart,
Tear me from the warm bosom of thy love,
And throw me like a pois'nous weed away :
' Can I bear that ? Bear to be curst and torn,
' And thrown out of thy family and name,
' Like a disease ?' Can I bear this from thee ?
' I never can :' No, all things have their end.
When I am dead, forgive and pity me.

[*Exit.*
Bir.

Bir. Stay, my Isabella——

What can she mean? These doubtings will distract me :
Some hidden mischief soon will burst to light ;
I cannot bear it——I must be satisfied——

'Tis she, my wife, must clear this darkness to me.

She shall—if the sad tale at last must come ;

She is my fate, and best can speak my doom. [*Exit.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

Enter Biron, Nurse following him.

BIRON.

I Know enough : th' important question

Of life or death, fearful to be resolv'd,

Is clear'd to me : I see where it must end ;

And need enquire no more—Pray, let me have

Pen, ink, and paper ; I must write a-while,

And then I'll try to rest——to rest for ever !

[*Exit Nurse.*]

Poor Isabella! Now I know the cause,

The cause of thy distress, and cannot wonder

That it has turn'd thy brain. If I look back

Upon thy loss, it will distract me too.

Oh, any curse but this might be remov'd !

But 'twas the rancorous malignity

Of all ill stars combin'd, of heav'n and fate——

Hold, hold my impious tongue—Alas ! I rave :

Why do I tax the stars, or heav'n, or fate ?

They are all innocent of driving us

Into despair ; they have not urg'd my doom ;

My father and my brother are my fates,

That drive me to my ruin. They knew well

I was alive. Too well they knew how dear

My Isabella——Oh, my wife no more !

How dear her love was to me—Yet they stood,

With a malicious silent joy, stood by,

And saw her give up all my happiness,

The treasure of her beauty, to another ;

' Stood by, and saw her marry'd to another :'

Oh, cruel father ! and unnatural brother !

' Shall I not tell you that you have undone me ?'

D 2

I have

I have but to accuse you of my wrongs,
 And then to fall forgotten——Sleep or death
 Sits heavy on me, and benumbs my pains :
 Either is welcome ; but the hand of death
 Works always sure, and best can close my eyes.

[*Exit Biron.*]

Enter Nurse and Sampson.

Nurse. Here's strange things towards, Sampson :
 what will be the end of 'em, do you think ?

Samp. Nay marry, nurse, I can't see so far ; but the
 law, I believe, is on Biron, the first husband's side.

Nurse. Yes ; no question, he has the law on his side.

Samp. For I have heard, the law says, a woman must
 be a widow, all out seven years, before she can marry
 again, according to law.

Nurse. Ay, so it does ; and our lady has not been a
 widow altogether seven years.

Samp. Why then, nurse, mark my words, and say
 I told you so : the man must have his wife again, and
 all will do well.

Nurse. But if our master Villeroy comes back again —

Samp. Why, if he does, he is not the first man that
 has had his wife taken from him.

Nurse. For fear of the worst, will you go to the old
 count, desire him to come as soon as he can ; there may
 be mischief, and he is able to prevent it.

Samp. Now you say something ; now I take you, nurse ;
 that will do well, indeed : mischief should be prevented
 a little thing will make a quarrel, when there's a woman
 in the way. I'll about it instantly.—— [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE drawn, *shows Biron asleep on a couch.*

Enter Isabella.

Isa. Asleep so soon ! Oh, happy ! happy thou,
 Who thus can sleep ! I never shall sleep more ——
 If then to sleep be to be happy, he
 Who sleeps the longest, is the happiest ;
 Death is the longest sleep—Oh, have a care !
 Mischief will thrive apace. Never wake more. [*To Bir.*]
 If thou didst ever love thy Isabella,
 To-morrow must be doomsday to thy peace.
 ——The sight of him disarms ev'n death itself.

The

—The starting transport of new quick'ning life
Gives just such hopes ; and pleasure grows again
With looking on him — Let me look my last —
But is a look enough for parting love !
Sure I may take a kiss — Where am I going !
Help, help me, Villeroy ! — Mountains and seas
Divide your love, never to meet my shame.

[Throws herself upon the floor ; after a short pause, she raises herself upon her elbow.]

What will this battle of the brain do with me !
This little ball, this ravag'd province, long
Cannot maintain — The globe of earth wants room
And food for such a war — I find I'm going —
Famine, plagues, and flames,
Wide waste and desolation, do your work
Upon the world, and then devour yourselves.
— The scene shifts fast — *[She rises.]* and now 'tis better with me ;

Conflicting passions have at last unhing'd
The great machine ! the soul itself seems chang'd !
Oh, 'tis a happy revolution here !

• The reas'ning faculties are all depos'd ;
• Judgment, and understanding, common-sense,
• Driv'n out as traitors to the public peace.
• Now I'm reveng'd upon my memory,
• Her seat dug up, where all the images
• Of a long mis-spent life, were rising still,
• To glare a sad reflection of my crimes,
• And stab a conscience thro' 'em ! You are safe,
• You monitors of mischief ! What a change !
• Better and better still ! This is the infant state
• Of innocence, before the birth of care.
• My thoughts are smooth as the Elysian plains,
• Without a rub : the drowsy falling streams
• Invite me to their slumbers.
• Would I were landed there — *[Sinks into a chair.]*

What noise was that ! A knocking at the gate !
It may be Villeroy — No matter who.

Bir. Come, Isabella, come —

Isa. Hark ! I'm call'd !

Bir. You stay too long from me.

Isa. A man's voice ! in my bed ! How came he there ?
Nothing but villainy in this bad world ; [Rises.

‘ Coveting neighbours goods, or neighbours wives :’
Here's physick for your fever.

[Draws a dagger, and goes backward to the couch.

‘ Breathing a vein is the old remedy.’

If husbands go to heav'n,

Where do they go that send em ?—This to try—

[Just going to stab him, he rises, she knows him, and shrieks.
What do I see !

Bir. Isabella, arm'd !

Isa. Against my husband's life !

‘ Who, but the wretch, most reprobate to grace,

‘ Despair e'er hardened for damnation,

‘ Could think of such a deed !—Murder my husband !’

Bir. Thou didst not think it.

Isa. Madness has brought me to the gates of hell,
And there has left me. ‘ Oh, the frightful change

‘ Of my distractions ! Or is this interval

‘ Of reason but to aggravate my woes,

‘ To drive the horror back with greater force

‘ Upon my soul, and fix me mad for ever ?’

Bir. Why dost thou fly me so ?

Isa. I cannot bear his sight ; distraction, come,
Possess me all, and take me to thyself !

Shake off thy chains, and hasten to my aid ;—

‘ Thou art my only cure——’ Like other friends,

‘ He will not come to my necessities ;

‘ Then I must go to find the tyrant out ;

‘ Which is the nearest way ?’ [Running out.

Bir. Poor Isabella, she's not in a condition
To give me any comfort, if she could :

Lost to herself—as quickly I shall be

To all the world——Horror comes fast around me ;

My mind is overcast—the gath'ring clouds

Darken the prospect—I approach the brink,

And soon must leap the precipice ! Oh, Heav'n !

While yet my senses are my own, thus kneeling

Let me implore thy mercies on my wife :

Release her from her pangs ; and if my reason,

O'erwhelm'd with miseries, sink before the tempest,

Pardon those crimes despair may bring upon me. [Rises.
Enter

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Sir, there's somebody at the door must needs speak with you ; he won't tell his name.

Bir. I come to him.

[*Exit Nurse.*]

'Tis Belford, I suppose ; he little knows
Of what has happen'd here ; I wanted him,
Must employ his friendship, and then——

[*Exit.*]

SCENE, *the street.*

Enter Carlos, with three ruffians.

Car. A younger brother ! I was one too long,
Not to prevent my being so again.
We must be sudden. Younger brothers are
But lawful bastards of another name,
Thrust out of their nobility of birth
And family, and tainted into trades.
Shall I be one of them—Bow, and retire,
To make more room for the unwieldy heir
To play the fool in ! No——
But how shall I prevent it ?—Biron comes
To take possession of my father's love——
Would that were all ; there is a birth-right too
That he will seize. Besides, if Biron lives,
He will unfold some practices, which I
Cannot well answer—therefore he shall die ;
This night must be dispos'd of : I have means
That will not fail my purpose. Here he comes.

Enter Biron.

Bir. Ha ! am I beset ? I live but to revenge me.

[*They surround him, fighting ; Villeroy enters with two servants ; they rescue him ; Carlos and his party fly.*]

Vil. How are you, Sir ? Mortally hurt, I fear.
Take care, and lead him in.

Bir. I thank you for the goodness, Sir ; tho' 'tis
Bestow'd upon a very wretch ; and death,
Tho' from a villain's hand, had been to me
An act of kindness, and the height of mercy——
But I thank you, Sir.

[*He is led in.*]

SCENE, *the inside of the house.*

Enter Isabella.

Isa. Murder my husband ! Oh ! I must not dare
To think of living on ; my desperate hand

In

In a mad rage may offer it again :

Stab any where but there. Here's room enough.

In my own breast, to act the fury in,

The proper scene of mischief. 'Villeroy comes ;

'Villeroy and Biron come ! Oh ! hide me from 'em—

'They rack, they tear ; let 'em carve out my limbs,

'Divide my body to their equal claims !

'My soul is only Biron's ; that is free,

'And thus I strike for him, and liberty.'

[Going to stab herself, Villeroy runs in, and prevents her, by taking the dagger from her.]

Vil. Angels defend and save thee !

Attempt thy precious life ! 'the treasury

'Of nature's sweets ! life of my little world !'

Lay violent hands upon thy innocent self !

Isa. Swear I am innocent, and I'll believe you.

What would you have with me ? Pray let me go.

'—Are you there, Sir ? You are the very man.

'Have done all this—You would have made.

'Me believe you married me ; but the fool.

'Was wiser, I thank you : 'tis not all gospel.

'You men preach upon that subject.'

Vil. Dost thou not know me, love ?

'*Isa* O yes : very well.

[Staring on him.]

'You are the widow's comforter ; that marries

'Any woman when her husband's out of the way :

'But I'll never, never take your word again.

'*Vil.* I am thy loving husband.'

'*Tis Villeroy, thy husband.*

Isa. I have none ; no husband—

[Weeping.]

Never had but one, and he dy'd at Candy,

'Did he not ? I'm sure you told me so ; you,

'Or somebody, with just such a lying look,

'As you have now.' Speak, did he not die there ?

Vil. He did, my life.

Isa. But swear it, quickly swear,

Biron enters bloody, and leaning upon his sword.

Before that screaming evidence appears,

In bloody proof against me—

[She seeing Biron, swoons into a chair ; Vil. helps her.]

Vil. Help there ! Nurse, where are you ?

Ha !

Ha ! I am distracted too ! [*Going to call for help, sees Bir.*
Biron alive !

Bir. The only wretch on earth that must not live.

Vil. Biron or Villeroy must not, that's decreed.

Bir. You've sav'd me from the hands of murderers :
Would you had not, for life's my greatest plague—

And then, of all the world, you are the man

I would not be obliged to——Isabella !

I came to fall before thee : I had dy'd

Happy, not to have found your Villeroy here :

A long farewell, and a last parting kiss. [*Kisses her.*

Vil. A kiss ! confusion ! it must be your last. [*Draws.*

Bir. I know it must—Here I give up that death

You but delay'd : Since what is past has been

The work of fate, thus we must finish it.

Thrust home, be sure. [*Faints.*

Vil. Alas ! he faints ! some help there.

Bir. 'Tis all in vain, my sorrows soon will end—

Oh, Villeroy ! let a dying wretch intreat you,

To take this letter to my father. My Isabella !

Couldst thou but hear me, my last words should bless thee.

I cannot tho' in death, bequeath her to thee. [*To Vil.*

But could I hope my boy, my little one,

Might find a father in thee—Oh, I faint—

I can no more—Hear me, heav'n ! Oh, support

My wife, my Isabella—Bless my child !

And take a poor unhappy—— [*Dies.*

Vil. He's gone—Let what will be the consequence,

I'll give it him. I have involv'd myself,

And would be clear'd ; that must be thought on now.

My care of her is lost in wild amaze. [*Going to Isa.*

'Are you all dead within there ? Where, where are you ?'

Good nurse, take care of her ; I'll bring more help. [*Exit.*

Isabella comes to herself.

Isa. Where have I been ?—Methinks I stand upon

The brink of life, ready to shoot the gulph

That lies between me and the realms of rest :

But still detain'd, I cannot pass the strait ;

Deny'd to live, and yet I must not die :

Doom'd to come back, like a complaining ghost,

To my unbury'd body——Here it lies——

[*Throws herself by Biron's body.*

My body, soul, and life. A little dust,

To

To cover our cold limbs in the dark grave——
There, there we shall sleep safe and sound together.

Enter Villeroy with servants.

Vil. Poor wretch ; upon the ground ! She's not herself :
Remove her from the body. [*Servants going to raise her.*

Isa. Never, never——

You have divorc'd us once, but shall no more——
Help, help me, Biron ?—Ha !—bloody and dead !
Oh, murder ! murder ! You have done this deed——
Vengeance and murder ! bury us together——
Do any thing but part us.

Vil. Gently, gently raise her.

She must be forc'd away.

[*She drags the body after her ; they get her into their arms, and carry her off.*

Isa. Oh, they tear me ! Cut off my hands——

Let me leave something with him——

'They'll clasp him fast——

Oh, cruel, cruel men !

This you must answer one day.

Vil. Good nurse, take care of her. [*Nurse follows her.*
Send for all helps : all, all that I am worth,
Shall cheaply buy her peace of mind again.

'Be sure you do, [*To a servant.*

'Just as I order'd you.' The storm grows loud——
[*Knocking at the door.*

I am prepar'd for it. Now let them in.

Enter Count Baldwin, Carlos, Belford, friends, with servants.

C. Bald. Oh, do I live to this unhappy day !
Where is my wretched son ?

Car. Where is my brother ?

[*They see him, and gather about the body.*

Vil. I hope in heav'n.

Car. Canst thou pity him !

Wish him in heav'n ! when thou hast done a deed,
That must for ever cut thee from the hopes
Of ever coming there.

Vil. I do not blame you——

You have a brother's right to be concern'd
For his untimely death.

Car.

Car. Untimely death, indeed !

Vil. But yet you must not say, I was the cause.

Car. Not you the cause ! Why, who should murder him ?

We do not ask you to accuse yourself,
But I must say, that you have murder'd him ;
And will say nothing else, till justice draws
Upon our side, at the loud call of blood,
To execute so foul a murderer.

Bel. Poor Biron ! Is this thy welcome home !

Friend. Rise, Sir ; there is a comfort in revenge,
Which yet is left you. [To C. Bald.]

Car. Take the body hence. [Biron carry'd off.]

C. Bald. What could provoke you ?

Vil. Nothing could provoke me
To a base murder, which, I find, you think
Me guilty of. I know my innocence ;
My servants too can witness that I drew
My sword in his defence, to rescue him.

Bel. Let the servants be call'd.

Fr. Let's hear what they can say.

Car. What they can say ! Why, what should servants
say ?

They're his accomplices, his instruments,
And will not charge themselves. If they could do
A murder for his service, they can lie,
Lie nimbly, and swear hard, to bring him off.
You say you drew your sword in his defence :
Who were his enemies ? Did he need defence ?
Had he wrong'd any one ? Could he have cause
To apprehend a danger, but from you ?
And yet you rescu'd him !—No, no, he came
Unseasonably, (that was all his crime)
Unluckily to interrupt your sport :
You were new marry'd—marry'd to his wife ;
And therefore you, and she, and all of you,
(For all of you I must believe concern'd)
Combin'd to murder him out of the way.

Bel. If it be so——

Car. It can be only so.

Fr. Indeed it has a face——

Car. As black as hell.

C. Bald.

C. Bald. The law will do me justice: send for the magistrate.

Car. I'll go myself for him——— [Exit.

Vil. These strong presumptions, I must own, indeed,
Are violent against me; but I have
A witness, and on this side heav'n too.

—— Open that door.

Door opens and Pedro is brought forward by Villeroy's servants.

Here's one can tell you all.

Ped. All, all; save me but from the rack, I'll confess all.

Vil. You and your accomplices design'd
To murder Biron?——Speak.

Ped. We did.

Vil. Did you engage upon your private wrongs,
Or were employ'd?

Ped. He never did us wrong.

Vil. You were set on then.

Ped. We were set on.

Vil. What do you know of me?

Ped. Nothing, nothing:

You sav'd his life, and have discover'd me.

Vil. He has acquitted me.

If you would be resolv'd of any thing,
He stands upon his answer.

Bel. Who set you on to act this horrid deed?

C. Bald. I'll know the villain; give me quick his name,
Or I will tear it from thy bleeding heart.

Ped. I will confess.

C. Bald. Do then.

Ped. It was my master, Carlos, your own son.

C. Bald. Oh, monstrous! monstrous! most unnatural!

Bel. Did he employ you to murder his own brother?

Ped. He did; and he was with us when 'twas done.

C. Bald. If this be true, this horrid, horrid tale,
It is but just upon me: Biron's wrongs
Must be reveng'd; and I the cause of all.

Fr. What will you do with him?

C. Bald. Take him a-part——

I know too much.

[Pedro goes in.

Vil. I had forgot—Your wretched, dying son

Gave

Gave me this letter for you. [*Gives it to Baldwin.*
 I dare deliver it. If it speaks of me,
 I pray to have it read.

C. Bald. You know the hand.

Bel. I know 'tis Biron's hand.

C. Bald. Pray read it. [*Bellford reads the letter.*

"S I R,

"I find I am come only to lay my death at your door.
 I am now going out of the world; but cannot forgive
 you, nor my brother Carlos, for not hindering my poor
 wife Isabella, from marrying with Villeroy; when you
 both knew, from so many letters, that I was alive.—

BIRON."

Vil. How!—Did you know it then?

C. Bald. Amazement, all!

Enter Carlos, with Officers.

Oh, Carlos! are you come? Your brother here,
 Here, in a wretched letter, lays his death
 To you and me—Have you done any thing
 To hasten his sad end!

Car. Bless me, Sir, I do any thing! Who, I?

C. Bald. He talks of letters that were sent to us.
 I never heard of any—Did you know
 He was alive?

Car. Alive! Heav'n knows, not I.

C. Bald. Had you no news of him, from a report,
 Or letter, never?

Car. Never, never, I.

Bel. That's strange, indeed: I know he often writ
 To lay before you the condition [*To C. Baldwin.*
 Of his hard slavery: and more, I know,
 That he had several answers to his letters.
 He said, they came from you; you are his brother.

Car. Never from me.

Bel. That will appear.
 The letters, I believe, are still about him;
 For some of 'em I saw but yesterday.

C. Bald. What did those answers say?

Bel. I cannot speak to the particulars;
 But I remember well, the sum of 'em
 Was much the same, and all agreed,
 That there was nothing to be hop'd from you;

E

That

That 'twas your barbarous resolution
To let him perish there.——

C. Bald. Oh, Carlos ! Carlos ! hadst thou been a brother——

Car. This is a plot upon me. I never knew
He was in slavery, or was alive,
Or heard of him, before this fatal hour.

Bel. There, Sir, I must confront you.
He sent you a letter, to my knowledge, last night ;
And you sent him word you would come to him——
I fear you came too soon.

C. Bald. 'Tis all too plain.——
Bring out that wretch before him. [*Pedro produced.*]

Car. Ha ! Pedro there !—Then I am caught, indeed.

Bel. You start at sight of him ;
He has confess'd the bloody deed.

Car. Well then, he has confess'd,
And I must answer it.

Bel. Is there no more ?

Car. Why !—what would you have more ? I know
And I expect it. [the worst,

C. Bald. Why hast thou done all this ?

Car. Why, that which damns most men, has ruin'd
The making of my fortune. Biron stood [me ;
Between me and your favour : while he liv'd,
I had not that ; hardly was thought a son,
And not at all a-kin to your estate.
I could not bear a younger brother's lot,
To live depending upon courtesy ——
Had you provided for me like a father,
I had been still a brother.

C. Bald. 'Tis too true ;
I never lov'd thee, as I should have done :
It was my sin, and I am punish'd for't.
Oh ! never may distinction rise again
In families : let parents be the same
To all their children ; common in their care,
And in their love of 'em—I am unhappy,
For loving one too well.

Vil. You knew your brother liv'd ; why did you take
Such pains to marry me to Isabella ?

Car. I had my reason's for't——

Vil. More than I thought you had.

Car. But one was this—

I knew my brother lov'd his wife so well,
That if ever he should come home again,
He cou'd not long out-live the loss of her.

Bel. If you rely'd on that, why did you kill him?

Car. To make all sure. Now, you are answer'd all.
Where must I go? I am tir'd of you questions.

C. Bald. I leave the judge to tell thee what thou art;
A father cannot find a name for thee.
But parricide is highest treason, sure,
To sacred nature's law; and must be so,
So sentenc'd in thy crimes. Take him away—
The violent remedy is found at last,
That drives thee out, thou poison of my blood,
Infected long, and only foul in thee. [*Carlos led off.*
Grant me, sweet Heav'n! thy patience to go thro'
The torment of my cure—Here, here begins
The operation—Alas! she's mad.

*Enter Isabella distracted, held by her women; her hair
dishevell'd; her little son running in before, being afraid
of her.*

Vil. My Isabella! poor unhappy wretch!
What can I say to her?

Isa. Nothing, nothing; 'tis a babbling world—
I'll hear no more on't. When does the court sit?
'I'll not be bought—What! to sell innocent blood!—'
You look like one of the pale judges here;
Minos, or Radamanth, or Æacus—
I have heard of you.

I have a cause to try, an honest one;
Will you not hear it? Then I must appeal
To the bright throne—Call down the heav'nly powers
To witness how you use me.

'*Wom.* Help, help, we cannot hold her.

'*Vil.* You but enrage her more.'

C. Bald. Pray give her way; she'll hurt nobody.

Isa. What have you done with him? He was here but
I saw him here. Oh, Biron, Biron! where, [now;
Where have they hid thee from me? He is gone—
But here's a little flaming cherubim—

Child. Oh, save me, save me! [*Running to Bald.*

Isa. The Mercury of Heav'n, with silver wings,
Impt for the flight, to overtake his ghost,
And bring him back again.

Child. I fear she'll kill me.

C. Bald. She will not hurt thee. [*She flings away.*]

Isa. Will nothing do? I did not hope to find
Justice on earth; 'tis not in Heav'n neither.

Biron has watch'd his opportunity-----

Softly; he steals it from the sleeping gods,

And sends it thus-----

[*Stabs herself.*]

Now, now I laugh at you, defy you all,

You tyrant-murderers.

Vil. Call, call for help---Oh, Heav'n! this was too much,

C. Bald. Oh, thou most injur'd innocence! Yet live,
Live but to witness for me to the world,
How much I do repent me of the wrongs,
Th' unnatural wrongs, which I have heap'd on thee,
And have pull'd down this judgment on us all.

Vil. Oh, speak, speak but a word of comfort to me.

C. Bald. If the most tender father's care and love
Of thee, and thy poor child, can make amends---
Oh, yet look up and live.

Isa. Where is that little wretch? [*They raise her.*]
I die in peace, to leave him to your care.

I have a wretched mother's legacy,
A dying kiss---pray let me give it him,
My blessing; that, that's all I have to leave thee.
Oh, may thy father's virtues live in thee,
And all his wrongs be buried in my grave.

[*Dies.*]

Vil. She's gone, and all my joys of life with her.

Where are your officers of justice now?
Seize, bind me, drag me to the bloody bar,
Accuse, condemn me; let the sentence reach
My hated life-----No matter how it comes;
I'll think it just, and thank you as it falls.
Self-murder is deny'd me; else, how soon
Could I be past the pain of my remembrance!
But I must live, grow grey with ling'ring grief,
To die at last in telling this sad tale.

C. Bald. Poor wretched orphan of most wretched parents!

'Scap-

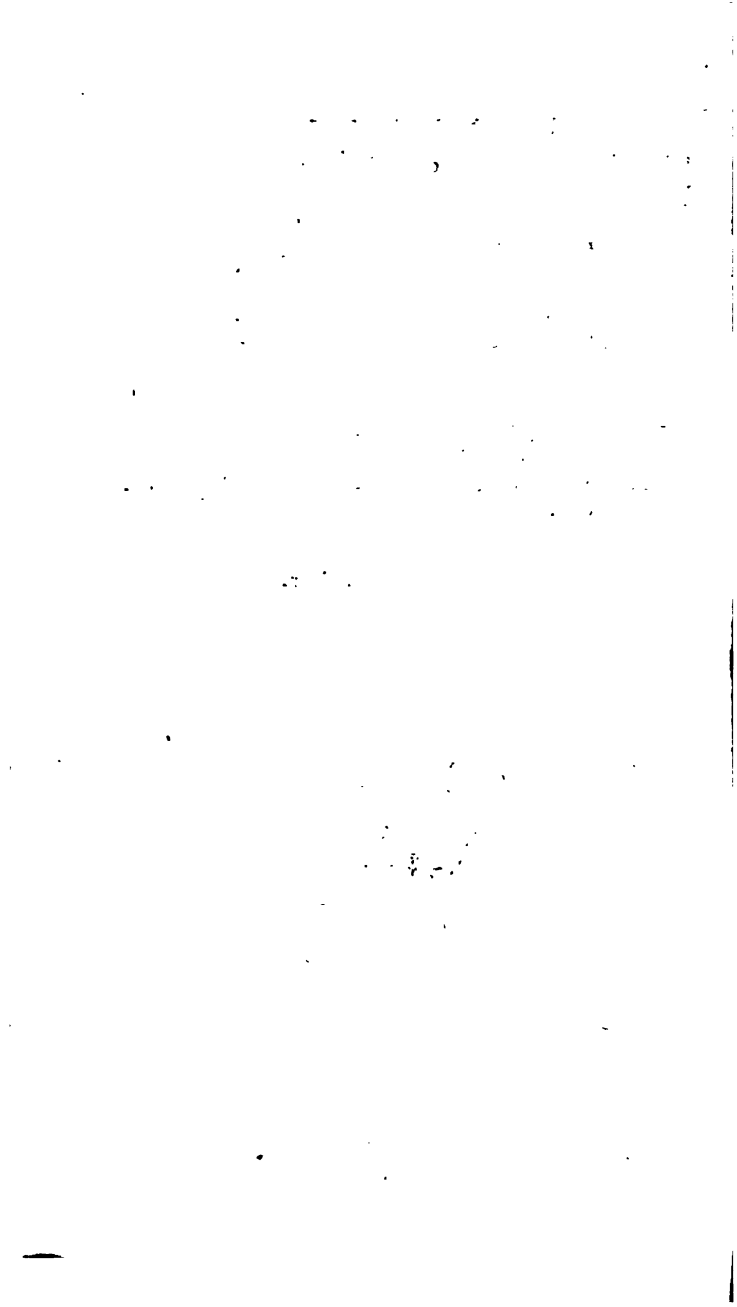
'Scaping the storm, thou'rt thrown upon a rock,
' To perish there.' The very rocks would melt,
Softens their nature, sure, to foster thee.

I find it by myself: my flinty heart,
That barren rock, on which thy father starv'd,
Opens it springs of nourishment to thee;
There's not a vein but shall run milk for thee.
Oh, had I pardon'd my poor Biron's fault,
His first, his only fault---this had not been.

To erring youth there's some compassion due;
But while with rigour you their crimes pursue,
What's their misfortune, is a crime for you. }
Hence learn, offending children to forgive:
Leave punishment to Heav'n---'tis Heav'n's preroga-
tive.

END of the FIFTH ACT.





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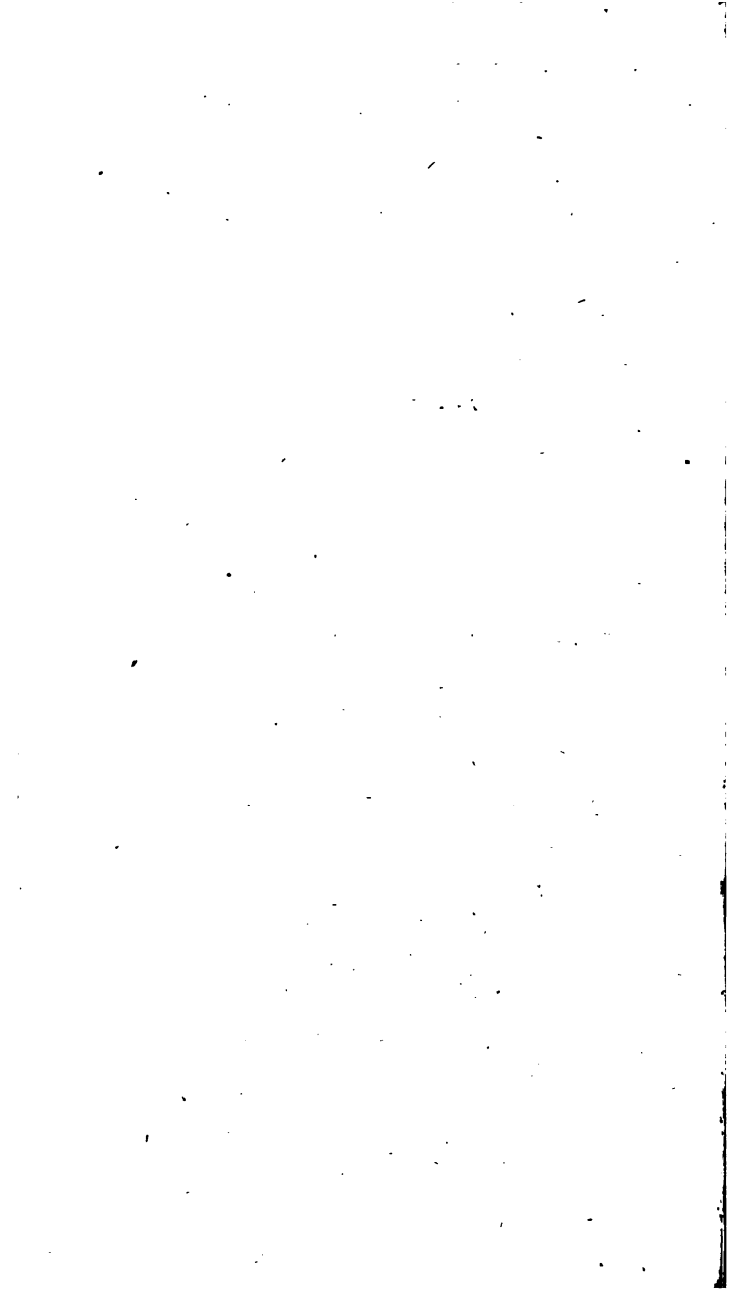


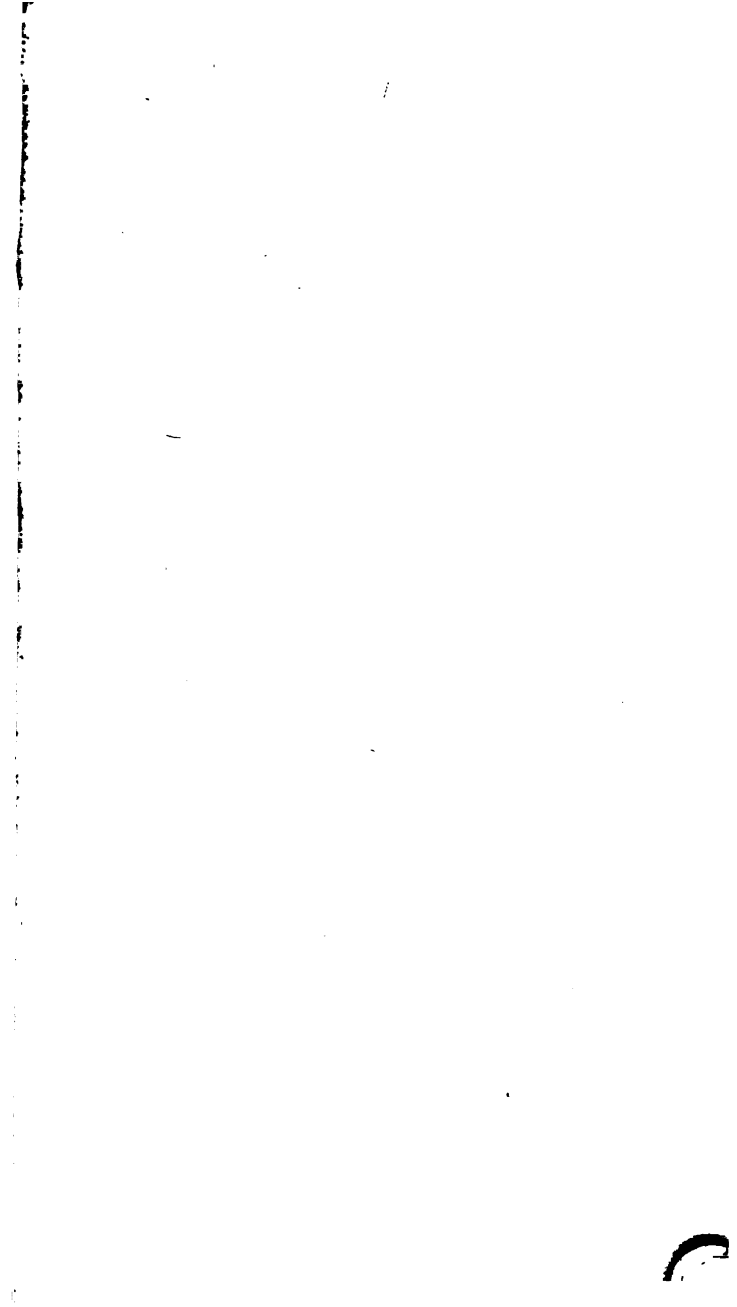














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